

Five Studies in Armenian Patristics by Robert W. Thomson

Robert William Thomson, the first professor of Armenian at Harvard (1969), published the studies below in a variety of journals between the years 1964 and 1982. The scans were made from the selection of reprints in *Studies in Armenian Literature and Christianity*, by Robert W. Thomson, Variorum (1994). A Wikipedia entry ([Robert W. Thomson](#)) describes his life and achievements.

[The Fathers in Early Armenian Literature](#), from *Studia Patristica* 12. (Berlin, 1975), pp. 457-470.

[Number symbolism and patristic exegesis in some early Armenian writers](#), from *Handes Amsorya* 90 (Vienna, 1976), pp. 117-138.

[The Transformation of Athanasius in Armenian Theology](#), from *Le Museon* 78 (Leuven, 1965), pp. 47-69.

[The Armenian Version of Ps. Dionysius Aeropagita](#), from *Acta Jutlandica* 57 (Aarhus, 1982), pp. 115-123.

[Some Philosophical Terms in the Teaching of Gregory](#), from *Revue des études arméniennes* n. s. 1 (Paris, 1964), pp. 41-46.

Compiled by Robert Bedrosian, 2020.

This material is presented solely for non-commercial educational/research purposes.

XII

The Fathers in Early Armenian Literature

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the significance of the church fathers in early Armenian literature and scholarship. I shall not be interested in assessing the value of Armenian translations for the study of the texts of non-Armenian writers. At this conference there is no need to dwell on the importance of the oriental versions of patristic works. Rather I wish to discuss some problems that arise in the study of *Armenian* literature. I would like to pose such questions as: which fathers were read, studied and translated by Armenian scholars; what patristic texts were available in Armenia; did these circulate in Armenian or in the original; and, most important of all, what texts influenced early Armenian writers – either directly as source material, or indirectly as models to be imitated.

The subject is, of course, enormous, for since classical Armenian literature was almost exclusively the domain of ecclesiastical interests the influence of the fathers was all pervasive. And even in the realm of supposedly “scientific” studies like astronomy, ideas taken from patristic writers played a rôle. To do justice to the title one would have to write the history of early Armenian literature in general. So in order to bring the present discussion within manageable bounds I shall restrict my comments to the Greek fathers and to the major Armenian texts in the first three centuries of Armenian literature, with only occasional forays into later times. Nor shall I be concerned with the questions of biblical or liturgical texts.

Although Eusebius tells us of a letter written by Dionysius of Alexandria in the mid-third century to the otherwise unknown Meruzanes, bishop of the Armenians,¹ it is not until the fourth century that the Armenians themselves began to show interest in the Greek fathers. But we cannot speak of Armenian literature until the fifth century, after the invention of a script for the Armenian tongue by the monk Mashtots. From the time of Gregory the Illuminator, whose consecration at Caesarea may be plausibly dated to

¹ Eusebius, H. E. VI 46. 2. This cannot be Greater Armenia. For various identifications see L. Duchesne, “L’Arménie chrétienne dans l’Histoire ecclésiastique d’Eusèbe,” *Mélanges Nicole*, Geneva 1909, p. 105–7; H. Gelzer, “Die Anfänge der armenischen Kirche,” *Berichte der königlichen sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, Leipzig, 47 (1895), p. 109–174, esp. p. 172; N. Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, translated by Nina Garsoian, Louvain 1970, p. 271.

314¹, until the beginning of the following century Greek and Syriac were the languages of the church. And as we learn from Faustos of Buzand – the later historian who describes the conflict between church and state in 4th century Armenia – the number of those converted in more than name during that century was small: only those who knew some Greek or Syriac really grasped the Christian gospel.² The three most significant patriarchs of the 4th century, Gregory, Nerses and Isaac (Sahak), had all received a good education in Greek literature, as had Mashtots himself. And Armenians who desired a more traditional and secular education attended the famous schools of the Eastern Roman empire; several studied with Libanius in Antioch, for example.³ So although some Armenians in the 4th century studied the Greek fathers, although schools for Greek were founded and Greek books circulated,⁴ we can hardly yet speak of the influence of Greek on Armenian literature. Nonetheless during this time a trend was set which proved extremely significant. It was to the Greek world, especially Constantinople, that the Armenians looked: first for authoritative teaching, and then, after the break in the 6th century, for learning and scholarship. However, as time went on the Armenian attitude towards Constantinople became increasingly ambivalent; respect and distrust were inextricably intertwined.⁵

The history of Armenian literature proper begins with Mashtots, who left a promising career in the government at the end of the 4th century in order to become a hermit.⁶ He attracted a number of disciples and began a series of missionary journeys to the wilder parts of Armenia and the Southern Caucasus. Though it was nearly 100 years since the establishment of Christianity in Western Armenia, the gospel had hardly yet penetrated to these outlying regions. In connection with his missionary activity Mashtots realised the need for a script to bring the gospel in the local tongue to these

¹ Cf. P. Ananian, "La data e le circostanze della consecrazione di S. Gregorio Illuminatore," *Le Muséon*, 74 (1961), p. 43–73 and 317–360. This date has gained wide acceptance (cf. M.-L. Chaumont, *Recherches sur l'histoire d'Arménie*, Paris 1969, p. 162, and C. Toumanoff, "The Third Century Armenian Arsacids," *Revue des études arméniennes*, N. S. 6 (1969), p. 272), but not universal approval (cf. B. MacDermot, "The Conversion of Armenia in 294 A. D.," *Revue des études arméniennes*, N. S. 7 (1970), p. 281–359).

² Faustos, III 13.

³ Cf. A. J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne*, Paris 1959, p. 108–9, and further references p. 522.

⁴ Cf. Faustos IV 4 (Nerses founds schools) and Moses Khorenatsi III 36 (Greek books are destroyed and the use of Greek is forbidden in favour of Persian by Merujan Artsruni).

⁵ For the ecclesiastical relations between Armenia and the Byzantine empire see G. Garitte, *La Narratio de Rebus Armeniae*, CSCO 132, Louvain 1952, and the copious bibliographies provided in his commentary.

⁶ The biography of Mashtots was written by his disciple Koriun in the 440's. The longer (more authentic) version and the shorter (a later rewriting) are printed

unhellenised areas¹. He had in fact been forestalled in the invention of a script for Armenian by a Syrian bishop Daniel – an interesting sidelight on the activities of Syrian Christians in Armenia². But this script, based on a semitic alphabet, proved inadequate and Mashtots fashioned a more satisfactory one based on Greek. The details of this new invention do not concern us here. What is significant is that, as Mashtots' pupil and biographer Koriun puts it: Armenia now for the first time became aware of the law of Moses, of the Prophets, of the Gospels and of the Pauline epistles in the Armenian tongue³.

The first efforts of Mashtots, the patriarch Isaac, and their disciples were directed towards providing Armenian translations of the bible (the book of Proverbs being the first text translated with the new script)⁴ and of the liturgy; soon followed the canons of the major councils and the fathers of the church. Pupils were set to learning the new script and a foreign language, and they were then sent abroad, to Edessa or Constantinople, in order to make translations.⁵ But although Koriun mentions several of these first translators by name, he gives no details of the books that they translated. He does say that the false books of Theodore (of Mopsuestia) began to circulate in Armenia and were thrown out by the Patriarch Isaac and Mashtots.⁶ Further light is thrown on this episode by another of Mashtots' pupils, Eznik, who had been sent to Edessa and then on to Constantinople as part of his training. The controversy over Theodore's theology had not reached Armenia until Acacius of Melitene had taken it upon himself to warn the Armenians after the council of Ephesus, at which no representative from Eastern Armenia had been present. While in Constantinople Eznik urged the patriarch Proclus to send an authoritative exposé of the teaching of Ephesus to Armenia, the famous *Tome to the Armenians*. But we are not so much concerned with the dogmatic controversies as with the influence of the Greek fathers. And in the correspondence surrounding this episode no mention is made of the orthodox fathers and their writings which might have been available in Armenian.⁷

together in the Lukasean Matenadaran vol. 13. Tiflis 1913. N. Akinean has produced a critical edition with commentary (Mekhitar Festschrift, Vienna 1949 = *Handes Amsorya* vol. 63, reprinted as vol. 1, fasc. 1 of *Texts and Studies in Early Literature*, Vienna 1952), but he has taken many liberties with the order of the text.

¹ Koriun, ed. of 1913, p. 11–12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12. For the missionary activity of Jacob of Nisibis in Armenia cf. Faustos III 10.

³ Koriun, p. 19.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15. Koriun adds that this was the text he used as a pupil when learning to write.

⁵ See especially Koriun, p. 30–31.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁷ These letters and the replies are preserved in the *Book of Letters* (cf. below p. 461), Tiflis 1901. For a translation and commentary on those of Acacius and Proclus see M. Tallon, "Livre des Lettres. 1^{er} groupe: documents concernant les relations

One of the few early Armenian writers who does mention by name the Greek fathers whom he had studied is Lazar P'arpetai. He was a very self-opiniated and cantakerous clergyman who ran into opposition at Etchmiadzin and was forced to leave the country. At the turn of the 5th and 6th centuries he wrote a defence to his patron, Vahan Mamikonian, the governor of Persian Armenia. In this self-righteous epistle¹ Lazar speaks of his education in the land of the Greeks (i. e. the Byzantine empire) and of the Greek fathers whom he had studied: these were Athanasius, the two Cyrils of Jerusalem and Alexandria, Basil and Gregory Nazianzenus.² Lazar also contrasts his knowledge of the scriptures, which his teachers had made him repeat three or four times, with the ignorance of those who did not even know the number of the canonical books. But unfortunately Lazar does not name the books that he considered canonical, nor does he mention their number.³

Lazar claimed to be familiar with the fathers he mentions in the original Greek. But it is possible on grounds of style to date the translation into Armenian of many patristic works to the fifth century.⁴ However, it is difficult to discover whether or not all such books were read by Armenian students or used by Armenian authors. In the following century also, little direct information can be gleaned. The historian Elisaeus, who wrote an account of the unsuccessful Armenian revolt against Sassanian Persia that was crushed in 451,⁵ makes much of the rôle of the church and casts the whole episode in a religious mould. The book contains long speeches and letters which defend the Armenian Christian faith and which borrow extensively from other Armenian writings and from John Chrysostom and Eusebius.⁶ But Elisaeus never mentions any of his sources, Greek or Armenian, by name. [The only book to which he refers explicitly is Maccabees, to the heroes of which he likens the Armenian soldiers.]⁷

avec les grecs," *Mélanges de l'Université saint Joseph*, vol. 32, fasc. 1, Beirut 1955. Cf. also M. Richard, "Acace de Mélitène, Proclus de Constantinople et la Grande Arménie," *Mémorial Louis Petit*, Bucarest 1948, p. 393-412.

¹ This is usually printed after his *History of the Armenians*; critical edition by G. Ter-Mkrtchian and St. Malkhasean, Tiflis 1904.

² Lazar, ed. of. 1904, p. 192.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 201. With regard to the canon, it is interesting to note that the Armenian version of the 60th canon of Laodicaea omits Esther, Baruch and Lamentations, but adds Maccabees (no number of books is given) after Daniel. See *Kanona-girk' Hayots I*, ed. V. Hakobyan, Erevan 1964, p. 241. This compilation of canon law is attributed to John of Odzun, Catholicos of Armenia in the early 8th century. On the importance of Maccabees in other Armenian writers see note 7 below.

⁴ See, for example, N. Akinean, "The golden age of Armenian literature," *Handes Amsorya*, 46 (1932), col. 105-128 (in Armenian).

⁵ But the *History* may not have been written before the early 7th century. See N. Akinean, *Elishe* (in Armenian, three volumes, German summaries to vols I and II), Vienna 1932, 1936, 1960.

⁶ Cf. Akinean, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 627-643.

⁷ Critical edition by E. Ter-Minasean, Erevan 1957, p. 105. There are also many reminiscences of Maccabees in the *History of Agathangelos*.

The most important source for the 6th century is the *Book of Letters*.¹ This is a compilation of a later date which brings together much of the official correspondence between the Armenian patriarchs and bishops and the Greeks, Syrians, and Georgians. Of particular interest to our present enquiry is the correspondence between the Armenians and the Syrians at the time of the two councils of Dvin (505 and 555) when the Armenian attitude to the council of Chalcedon crystalized. In these letters we have a plethora of reference to the heretics, most frequently the so-called "Nestorians" who followed the teaching of Diodore, Theodore, Theodoret, Ibas and other misguided fathers.² (In 555 the *Tome* of Leo and Severus are also anathematized).³ Only Cyril of Alexandria's *Twelve Chapters* and the *Henotikon* of Zeno are mentioned by title in this correspondence as containing authoritative teaching,⁴ but we have a long list of other blessed fathers which is of some interest: Ignatius, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory the Great (i. e. Nazianzenus) and his two homonyms, Julius, "leader of the Western road to life", Ambrose, John (Chrysostom), Atticus, Theophilus, and Proclus.⁵ This is a curious list. Athanasius, Basil, the Gregories, John Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria are often mentioned and were already well known in Armenia. Atticus was patriarch of Constantinople when Mashots visited the Byzantine capital,⁶ and Proclus, his successor, was revered for the letter concerning the council of Ephesus and Theodore of Mopsuestia.⁷ Ignatius and Theophilus (of Alexandria?) are rarely mentioned by Armenian writers, though translations of some of their works in Armenian are known.⁸ The reference to Julius is presumably to the Apollinarian forgeries which were attributed to him and included in Timothy Aelurus' florilegium.⁹ But the reference to Ambrose is unique and most puzzling.

In the same letter that contains this list, written in 505 by Babgen patriarch of Armenia, there are also references to the authoritative writing of Ampelis of Cherson and Anatolius the pious priest. This may be a confusion of Timothy Aelurus' brother Anatolius who accompanied him on his exile to Cherson; the writing would then be the famous *Refutation of the Council of*

¹ Cf. note p. 459, note 7.

² Book of Letters, p. 46.

³ Ibid., p. 56.

⁴ Ibid., p. 49.

⁵ Ibid., p. 50-51.

⁶ Koriun, p. 25.

⁷ Cf. p. 459, and note 7.

⁸ Cf. G. Zарphanalean, Catalogue des anciennes traductions arméniennes, siècles IV-XIII (in Armenian), Venice 1889, s. v. Ignatius and Theophilus.

⁹ The compliment paid to Julius may be paralleled in the remark in Elisaeus, p. 72: "... the Christian faith which was received from the patriarch of Rome." But here the reference is probably to the New Rome, since Tiridates "who was brought up in the land of the Greeks" is mentioned immediately preceding.

Chalcedon by Timothy.¹ Whether this identification is correct or not, the anti-Chalcedonian florilegium was translated into Armenian fifty years later in connection with the second council of Dvin.² This translation proved most significant for later Armenian literature, not only in providing a source book, but especially because it served as a model for similar florilegia in Armenian.

The first such original Armenian collection, the *Seal of Faith*, was put together in the early 7th century, during the pontificate of the Catholicos Komitas.³ The *Seal of Faith* has often been ransacked for the fragments of lost works that it contains (e. g. Irenaeus);⁴ the texts it quotes have been used as valuable early witnesses to the text of known works; and studies have been made of the tendentious alterations that many of these texts underwent.⁵ But the question that is of most concern to our present enquiry does not seem to have been discussed. Did the Armenian compiler take his fragments from earlier collections of the same ilk, or did he make his own selection from the texts in his library? And if he followed the latter procedure, at least in some cases, did he translate that passage from a Greek manuscript, or did he have a previously existing Armenian translation before him? The *Seal of Faith* included extracts from 10 works composed in Armenian⁶, from two Syrian writers, Ephrem and Philoxenus, and from 25 authors whose works were originally composed in Greek. From these 25 we have to exclude Timothy Aelurus, whose *Refutation* was quoted from the Armenian translation, and those other texts taken from the same florilegium. But we are left with quite an impressive list. A comparison of the quotations with the Armenian translations of the complete texts reveals that the following Armenian texts were used by the compiler. The list does not contain many surprises, but it does offer confirmation of the use of Armenian versions rather than Greek originals in the early 7th century.⁷

¹ This is the theory of the editor of the *Seal of Faith*, p. lxiiff. (On this work see note 3 below). The Armenian version of Timothy's *Refutation* was published by K. Ter-Mekerttschian and E. Ter-Minassiantz, *Timotheus Aelurus Widerlegung*, Leipzig 1908.

² For bibliography on the date of this translation see Garitte, *Narratio*, p. 163-5.

³ Knik' Hawatoy, ed. K. Ter-Mkrtschean, *Etchmiadzin* 1914. Cf. J. Lebon, "Les citations patristiques grecques du *sceau de la foi*," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 25 (1929), p. 5-32.

⁴ Cf. H. Jordan, *Armenische Irenaeusfragmente*, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, Band 36, Heft 3, Leipzig 1913.

⁵ Cf. R. W. Thomson, "The Transformation of Athanasius in Armenian Theology," *Le Muséon*, 78 (1965), p. 47-69, esp. p. 59.

⁶ There are quotations from nine authors (Agathangelos, Eznik, John Mandakuni, Sahak, Babgen, Nerses, John II Catholicos, Abraham, John Mayragometsi) and one refutation of heretics in credal form.

⁷ In what follows the references to the Greek texts will be found in the article of Lebon; see note 3 above. For the Armenian versions of the various texts see Zarphanalean, p. 461, note 8. The article by M. Djanachian, "Les Arménistes et les

Athanasius: Of his authentic works, only the *Letter to Epictetus* (quoted in its entirety) is a worked over form of an earlier Armenian version. The extracts from the *Letter to the Antiochenes* and the *Contra Arianos III* are taken from Timothy's *Refutation*. Of the unauthentic works the entire *Dialogus IV de sancta Trinitate* is cited, but under the name of Basil. The text is less complete than that of the other MSS of this work in Armenian. The origin of the extracts from the *Contra Apollinarium I* is obscure; no complete Armenian text of this book is known, though *C. Apollinarium II* exists in several MSS. These extracts diverge from the Greek text. The extracts from the *De Cruce et Passione* bear no relation to the complete Armenian translation, though this is attributed to the "first translators."¹

Basil of Caesarea: The compiler of the *Seal of Faith* drew on previous translations of the *Homilia de fide*, the *Homilia de gratiarum actione* and the *Homilia quod Deus non est auctor malorum*. These were drawn from an Armenian collection of Basil's homilies in the same order as they appear in the MSS. The quotation from the homily on Julitta also probably comes from this collection, but I have been unable to check this.

Cyril of Alexandria: Several works of Cyril's are quoted from Timothy's *Refutation*, but the entire *Explicatio XII capitum Ephesi* and part of *Letter LV* are taken from previous Armenian translations. The most interesting item by Cyril in the *Seal of Faith* is the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, which is quoted very extensively and which preserves more of the text than the extant Greek fragments².

Cyril of Jerusalem: The extracts from the *Catecheses* are all taken from the Armenian version made in the fifth century.

Dionysius the Areopagite: The *Seal of Faith* contains two quotations from the Areopagite which are taken from a previous translation; these are from the *Mystica theologia* ch. 4 and the *Epistle to Gaius*. Part of this second item is repeated again in a corrupted form. Also from ps. Dionysius is a quotation attributed to Hierotheus; again the Armenian version served as the source. Parts of this passage are repeated twice; once from the longer extract and

Mekhitarists," *Armeniacae, Mélanges d'études arméniennes*, Venice 1969, p. 383 — 445, is helpful and gives references to the more recent literature though it naturally concentrates on the work of the Mechitarists. The bibliographies in J. Quasten's *Patrology* (Utrecht/Antwerp) are more inclusive and wide-ranging. By far the most complete reference work is H. S. Anasyan, *Haykakan Matenagitut'iun* (Armenian Bibliology), which gives full references to manuscripts as well as published texts, but to date only the first volume (A to Ar, Erevan 1959) has appeared. There is no "Armenian Patrology" to compare with what we have for Syriac or Georgian.

¹ According to a colophon cited in Zarphanalean, op. cit., p. 287. Cf. R. P. Casey, "Armenian manuscripts of St. Athanasius of Alexandria," *Harvard Theological Review*, 24 (1931), p. 43—59. esp. p. 52.

² Cf. J. Lebon, "Fragments arméniens du commentaire sur l'épître aux Hébreux de saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie," *Le Muséon*, 44 (1931), p. 69—114 and 46 (1933), p. 237—246.

once from a completely different version. This second version was known to Stephen Imastaser, who quotes a longer passage containing the same fragment in his florilegium on the *Incorruptibility of the Flesh* in the early 8th century.¹

Epiphanius: From Epiphanius there are several quotations of the *Ancoratus*. But as no Armenian version of this has yet been reported, it is impossible to say whether these extracts were culled from a Greek or an Armenian text. One fragment is also quoted in Timothy Aelurus' *Refutation*, but the two Armenian texts diverge widely, Timothy's being closer to the Greek.

Gregory Nazianzenus: The *Seal of Faith* gives many extracts from Gregory's *Orationes*. These were all taken from a previous Armenian translation which was carelessly done. The translator seems not to have understood Greek very well, and when one adds the corruptions that have crept into the transmission of the *Seal of Faith* to the obscurities of the first translation, the result is sometimes incomprehensible. Attributed to Gregory Nazianzenus are also two extracts from the *Oratio de deitate Filii et Spiritus sancti* of Gregory of Nyssa. What is interesting is that this work was included among the *Orationes* of Nazianzenus in at least some manuscripts of the original translation.

Gregory the Wonderworker: The *Seal of Faith* quotes the *De fide capitula XII* in its entirety, but I do not know whether the translation was made by the compiler. There are some extracts from this work in Timothy's *Refutation*, but the Armenian texts have no relation to each other. Of the *κατὰ μέγεθος λόγος*, an Apollinarian work attributed to Gregory, the extracts are all taken from the Armenian version of Timothy.

Gregory of Nyssa: From Gregory of Nyssa the *Seal of Faith* gives extracts from a previous Armenian translation of the *De hominis opificio* and the *De oratione dominica*. Extracts from other works are copied from Timothy.

Irenaeus: The quotations from the *Demonstratio* and the *Adversus Haereses* are from the previous translation, but the *Seal of Faith* also offers four quotations from unidentified works attributed to Irenaeus.

John Chrysostom: From John the *Seal of Faith* gives many extracts. There are quotations from the *Commentary on Isaiah* which probably come from an earlier Armenian translation of the whole. Most of the Greek has perished, so it is not always clear whence the compiler of our florilegium took his text, for in places his extracts make better sense than the printed Armenian edition. On the whole the extracts and the full text are close, but in the quotations from scripture there are wide variants. With the *Commentary on Matthew* the situation is more complicated. The Armenian version represented by the published text is a very free rendering, but the translation in the *Seal of Faith* is much closer to the Greek. Two of the five

¹ Published by G. Ter-Mkrtchian, "Stephanosi Imastasiri Vasn Anapakanut'ean Marmnoyn, Ararat (Etchmiadzin), vol. 35 no. 3-4 (1902), p. 368-400.

extracts are also found in Timothy, and although the Armenian texts have variants between them they are too close to be entirely different translations. So unless the compiler of the *Seal of Faith* made his own translation, basing himself partly on the Armenian version of Timothy, there were already two different Armenian versions of this commentary circulating before the 7th century. The extract from the *Commentary on John* is too short for conclusions to be drawn with confidence, while for those from the commentaries on the *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, and the *homilia VII dicta in templo Anastasiae* I have found no Armenian parallels. (The extract from the commentary on Romans is taken from Timothy.) The extracts from the two spurious homilies, *de fide* and *in crucem*, are taken from previous Armenian translations. Other spurious works attributed to Chrysostom are put under the name of John of Jerusalem in the *Seal of Faith*. These have no Armenian parallels, save one extract from the *expositio fidei*. This is quoted in its entirety by Timothy, and the same fragment is quoted in the 8th century by Stephen of Siunik in his florilegium on the *Incorruptibility of the Flesh*. But the three Armenian versions of this paragraph differ greatly.

Peter of Alexandria: The same short quotation as appears in Timothy, but the translations are quite different.

Proclus of Constantinople: The *Seal of Faith* gives an extensive quotation from Proclus' famous *Letter to the Armenians*. Unfortunately the Armenian text of this epistle in the *Book of Letters* is incomplete and lacks the first part from which these quotations are taken. There is no reason to suppose that the Armenian translation was not originally complete. To the *Homily on Easter*, from which two quotations are given in the *Seal of Faith*, there is no Armenian parallel.

Severian of Gabala: There are many quotations from the *Homilies* of Severian; these are taken from the previous Armenian translation. Another quotation from the homilies of Severian is attributed to Eusebius of Emesa, which is hardly surprising in view of the confusion between the works of these two fathers in Armenia.

After the early seventh century our information about the fathers studied in Armenia increases. In Sebeos the historian, who wrote soon after 661, there are quotations which perhaps show knowledge of the *Seal of Faith*.¹ Sebeos also refers to a writing of Gregory, used by the Armenians in a dogmatic controversy with Syrian and Georgian representatives before the Great King Khosrov in Ctesiphon.² Although one is tempted to associate

¹ Sebeos (Armenian text of Tiflis 1913, Lukasean Library no. 7) gives three quotations from Cyril's anathemas (p. 218) which may be taken from the *Seal of Faith*. But the texts have significant differences. Those texts found in the Armenian version of Timothy and the printed Armenian version of Cyril offer quite different translations.

² Sebeos, p. 197.

this with the work of Agathangelos, some Armenian scholars have equated this "writing" of Gregory with the *Seal of Faith*.¹ Sebeos repeats the familiar names of Athanasius, Basil, the three Gregories and others; and we find another such list of orthodox fathers in the canons attributed to John Mandakuni.² But only after the 7th century, beginning with Stephen of Siunik, have colophons survived attributing the translation of specific texts to specific scholars. In later times, as surviving colophons, letters and other sources become more plentiful, we can begin to reconstruct the libraries of certain individuals and of the monasteries and scriptoria where they worked. The 12th century is a particularly fruitful period to study in this regard as it was a time of renewed enthusiasm for the translation of Greek texts and a time of new and close contacts with the Latin West. Armenian monks and scholars mingled with the Greeks, Georgians, Syrians and Latins on the Black Mountain outside Antioch, and many colophons testify to the hunting down and translating of texts hitherto unknown in Armenian.

Unfortunately we lack such detailed information for the earlier period. And although we know some of the texts because they were used in dogmatic controversies, it is impossible to reconstruct the entire library of Greek fathers available in Armenian translation by the 7th century. Furthermore it is risky to rely on the names and titles quoted in the florilegia, for in these compilations, as in apologies and official letters, the same texts tend to recur, often with deliberate alterations. One may legitimately doubt whether the compilers of such documents were usually acquainted with the original texts. In the case of Athanasius, for example, the quotations and the complete texts circulated independently, and no one seems to have bothered to check the former against the latter. Had he done so, he might well have wondered if there were not two Athanasius, one a writer of the 4th century, the other an anti-Chalcedonian of Julianist tendencies.³

There is another type of Armenian compilation which so far has not been greatly explored. I refer to the *catenae* of biblical exegetical texts. These take various forms. Sometimes they are in the manner of questions and responses, with quotations from Greek, Syrian and Armenian writers thrown in. Others follow the biblical text more closely and intersperse the verses with commentaries from the fathers. In this way we have Armenian frag-

¹ See the discussion in the Preface to the *Seal of Faith*, p. xiiff. The later Stephen of Taron (*Universal History*, 2nd edition, St. Petersburg 1885, p. 94) adds that the History (*patmut' iun*, not writing, *gir*, as in Sebeos) of Gregory served as a proof for the Armenian position in the debate over the council of Chalcedon. The only council to which reference is made in the History of Agathangelos is Nicaea, but the theology of the Catechism in that work does support a rejection of "two natures." See R. W. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, Cambridge, Mass. 1970, p. 19-20.

² *Kanonagirk'* (see p. 460, note 3), p. 496-7.

³ Cf. p. 462, note 5.

ments of lost works (e. g. Apollinarius on Genesis and Leviticus).¹ But such collections are later than the period we are discussing and the question of their originality remains to be explored.

When we turn from the question of which patristic texts were available in Armenian to the question of which texts exercised a direct or indirect influence on original Armenian compositions, we find that surprisingly little work has been done. And even when patristic borrowings have been detected, we are often left with the problem whether the Armenian author was acquainted with the fathers in the original Greek (a language of which all educated Armenians had some command), or whether he relied on translations. As an example of the latter we may cite a treatise on meteorological signs attributed to the Armenian astronomer and mathematician Ananias of Shirak. In fact this tract is an almost verbatim rewriting of the Armenian version of Basil's *Hexaemeron*.² But such clear cut borrowings are rare. In Lazar and Moses Khorenatsi we find verbal reminiscences of the Armenian version of Eusebius' *Chronicle*. In Elisaeus there are verbal reminiscences of the Armenian translations of John Chrysostom and of Philo. But in most cases the borrowings have been so reworked that it is practically impossible to tell whether the author took his ideas from the original or from an Armenian version.

This problem arises in the study of the two works in 5th century Armenian literature that depend the most on patristic texts. The best known and most studied of these is the treatise of Eznik, a pupil of Mashtots whom we have already mentioned. This treatise survived in a single MS without title. By its first editor it was named "Refutation of the Sects", while in his more recent edition the late L. Mariès renamed it *De Deo*.³ Eznik's theme is the problem of evil in a creation that is by nature good. He develops his argument by refuting the major philosophical and religious systems that gave evil an independent existence: gnostic philosophy, the Zurvanite interpretation of Zoroastrianism, and Marcion's theology. What is of particular interest to us is the way in which Eznik used and adapted a wide range of Greek and Syriac sources. He never mentions these by name, but studies over many years have shown that they include Methodius and Adamantius, Aristides, Basil, Diodore of Tarsus, Epiphanius, Hippolytus and Ephrem. There are also reminiscences of other Greek writers⁴. But Eznik was acquainted with his sources in their original languages. And although he may also

¹ As in Venice, Mechitarist library, no. 219, where the fragments show no correlation with those in the catena published by Nicephorus, Leipzig 1772.

² Cf. H. T'orocean in *Bazmavep*, 54 (1896), p. 214-221, and G. V. Abgaryan, "Concerning the work *On Clouds and Signs* attributed to Shirakatsi," *Patmbanasirakan Handes* (Erevan), 1971 no. 1 (= no. 52), p. 77-94.

³ L. Mariès, *Eznik de Kolb, De Deo*, *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 28, fasc. 3 and 4, Paris 1959.

⁴ See L. Mariès, *Le De Deo d'Eznik de Kolb, études de critique littéraire et textuelle*, Paris 1924, extrait de la *Revue des études arméniennes*, vol. 4, fasc. 1.

have been the translator of some of these texts from Greek into Armenian, his book in no way promoted the study of these Greek writers in Armenia. In fact his treatise was little known, it was rarely quoted by later Armenian authors, and in nearly every respect it was not only unique but unrecognised in Armenian literature.

More interesting from our point of view are the theological sections in the *History* of Agathangelos. This *History* purports to describe the conversion of Armenia to Christianity and the activity of Gregory the Illuminator. The longest section of this curious book takes the form of a sermon or catechism supposedly preached by Gregory to the Armenian court. It rapidly surveys the creation of the world, the origin of sin, the prophecies of and O. T. parallels to the life of Christ, the birth, death and resurrection of Christ, and the life of the spirit in the church. This text may be dated to the mid-5th century, a decade or two after Eznik's work. Because it purported to be the traditional and authoritative teaching of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, this long sermon was frequently quoted by later writers and it played a significant rôle in the formulation of a specifically Armenian theology.

Like Eznik, Agathangelos never mentions his sources by name, nor does he quote them verbatim. But it can be shown that he is indebted to a number of the better known Greek fathers. For his exposition of the creation of the world the *Commentaries on Genesis* by John Chrysostom and the *Hexaemeron* of Basil provided much information. In his discussion of O. T. prophecies and parallels Agathangelos drew on the *Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem. Athanasius, Eusebius of Caesarea, the two Gregories of Nazianzen and Nyssa, and especially Cyril of Alexandria all had an influence on the theology of this catechism¹. Unfortunately, however, we cannot tell whether Agathangelos was using Armenian translations of these fathers or was acquainted with the originals. Even more than Eznik he has reworked his borrowings so that one cannot compare his text directly with the known Armenian versions. For example, of 32 close parallels between Agathangelos and Cyril of Jerusalem, not one has identical wording with the Armenian version. But extensive knowledge of Greek literature (and of Syriac also) in the original texts was usual amongst Armenian writers of the early period, most of whom had lived and studied abroad for considerable periods of time.

The influence of Greek patristic writers was not confined to providing ideas and interpretations which Armenian authors could adapt to their own purposes. The fathers also provided Armenian authors with models – or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, a specific outlook and attitude towards the basic source material. We cannot here survey all the various kinds of early Armenian literature. Even leaving out of consideration all the technical, scientific, philosophical and grammatical texts which are based on Greek sources and Greek methods, we still have a large amount of homil-

¹ See the Introduction to the Teaching of Saint Gregory (as p. 466, note 1).

etic and exegetical literature, as well as all the dogmatic treatises. But the most interesting and original compositions in early Armenian literature are undoubtedly the various histories. The Armenians may not have produced a Thucydides, but they can boast of a large number of creditable historians who are of more than parochial interest.

The self-avowed purposes of the Armenian historians were basically two: to present an ordered narrative of the worthy and glorious deeds of past generations, and to offer their readers an edifying narrative which would deter men from following impious ways and show them the eventual blessings that are enjoyed by those who suffer for the sake of Christ and his church. In both regards they were heavily indebted to Eusebius. For the idea of history as a profitable and edifying narrative we could quote Elisaeus' final sentence: "This memorial has been written concerning him (i. e. the villain of the book, Vasak), in order to reprove his sins, so that everyone who hears and learns of this may heap curses on him and not become an admirer of his deeds." Lazar in his Introduction explains that he wishes to expound how many of the most illustrious Armenians gave up their lives for the church, how the clergy were martyred for their faith, and how those who apostatised inherited the eternal fire prepared for Satan and his companions. Such motives are in the spirit of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, one of the first books to be translated into Armenian, and can be paralleled not only in Eusebius' preface but even more clearly in Book VIII 2.3: "We shall add to the general history only those things that may be profitable, first to ourselves and then to those who come after us."

Of equal significance was Eusebius' *Chronicle*, though this was perhaps not translated until the end of the 6th century.¹ After that time it was quoted repeatedly, and it formed the basic source for the sections in Moses Khorenatsi and later writers that deal with the ancient past of the world outside Armenia. The influence of Eusebius' emphasis on strict chronology finds its classic expression in the dictum of Moses Khorenatsi: "There is no true history without chronology."² The *Chronicle* of Eusebius also served as a mine for curious antiquarian information. One example will suffice. In the *History* of Agathangelos there are some brief references to the heroic exploits of king Tiridates while he was in exile, before his restoration to the Armenian throne and his conversion to Christianity. Amongst other things Tiridates is supposed to have distinguished himself at the Olympic games. Moses elaborates on this by comparing Tiridates to two earlier athletes and by claiming that his hero could subdue with one hand twice the number of bulls that they could subdue with two hands. The names of these athletes were taken (at random) from the list of Olympic victors given in Eusebius' *Chronicle*.³

¹ Cf. J. Karst, *Die Chronik des Eusebius*, GCS 20, Leipzig 1911, p. xxxiv-xxxviii, though he admits that Lazar was familiar with it.

² Eusebius, *Chronicle*, par. 2; Moses, II 82.

³ Agathangelos, § 202; Moses, II 79.

The influence of the fathers in early Armenian literature is thus all pervasive and goes beyond what one might be tempted to call "strictly theological" texts. The reasons are clear. The Armenian alphabet was invented as an aid to missionary activity. The first generations of translators and writers were monks and bishops; and though their interests were wide, they brought to their work a religious viewpoint and a religious training. Except in the scientific field, there were no lay authors for many hundreds of years. It is perhaps curious that the interest shown in Greek literature during the first century B. C. by Armenians should have borne no fruit. The son of Tigranes the Great, Artavazd, who ruled after him, had quite a reputation as a Greek writer.¹ But this Hellenistic veneer was as artificial as it was thin.

No school of pre-Christian Armenian literature ever developed. When in the 5th century A. D. a native Armenian literature burst into sudden bloom we find the Armenian writers thinking in Christian terms and using Christian models in their descriptions of a society that was basically Iranian. So, although Armenian literature has preserved many texts of interest to the patristic scholar, even more important is a knowledge of the Greek and Syriac fathers for those who would study the Armenian writers for their own sake.

¹ Cf. Plutarch, Crassus, 33. On the whole question of Armenian literature before the invention of the Armenian script see G. Kh. Sargsyan, "Historiography in the pre-Mesrop period," *Patma-banasirakan Handes* (Erevan), 1969 no. 1 (= no. 44), p. 107–126.

Additional Note: The influence of Basil of Caesarea's *Hexaemeron* in Armenia has been studied by K.M. Muradyan, *Barseł Kesarac'in ev nra 'Vec'orean' hay matengrut'yan mej*, Erevan 1976. The same author published a critical edition of the Armenian text, *Yalags vec'awreay Ararč'ut'ean*, Erevan 1984, without acknowledging that this Armenian text had been translated from the Syriac version, not directly from the Greek. This had long been suspected and was first demonstrated conclusively by L. Ter-Petrosyan. See now R.W. Thomson, "The Syriac and Armenian Versions of the *Hexaemeron* by Basil of Caesarea", *Eleventh International Conference on Patristic Studies*, Oxford 1991, *Studia Patristica* XXVII [1993], 113–117.

NUMBER SYMBOLISM AND PATRISTIC EXEGESIS IN SOME EARLY ARMENIAN WRITERS

"(Scripture) is to be understood in two ways: one is tangible and visible, the other intellectual¹." [*Yačazapatum IX*]

"For God established this world as a school², that creatures might learn the Creator's care in fashioning and arranging and (know) that things visible and invisible are sustained through his providence." [*Yačazapatum VII*]



What follows is an attempt to elucidate the patristic affinities of number symbolism in some early Armenian theological texts³. I

shall be concerned not with mathematical and mystical symbolism inherited from classical antiquity and the world of late Hellenistic Judaism, but with specifically Christian interpretations of various numbers⁴. Without attempting an exhaustive enquiry into the history of the different interpretations, I shall try to indicate possible sources and parallels in Greek or Syriac texts which were known in Armenia. This article, therefore, is more a study of patristic influence on Armenian theologians than a contribution to the mysteries of number symbolism.



¹ Cf. Elišē, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, Venice 1859, p. 235: "the words of scripture are as a shadow in a mirror."

² The idea of nature as a school could be found in the Armenian Philo, *Questions on Genesis*, iii 27 (Loeb edition, Supplement I, translated by R. Marcus; Armenian text, *Philonis Judaei Paralipomena Armena*, ed. J. B. Aucher, Venice 1826) and in Basil of Caesarea, *Hexameron I 6* (Migne, P. G. 29.16; the Armenian version, Venice 1830, was not available to me). This passage from the *Yačazapatum* is echoed by Anania, p. 238 (see references in note 3).

³ The texts most frequently cited in this article are: Agathangelos, *Patmut'iwn Hayoc'*, ed. K. Ter Mkrtč'ean and St. Kanayanc', Tiflis 1909; Anania Sirakac'i, *Matenagrut'yunē*, ed. A. G. Abrahamyan, Erevan 1944 (notably the tract "On the interpretation of numbers" pp. 237—250) [Although the authorship of this piece has been denied to Anania (see Abrahamyan, p. 237), if the tract "On Easter" (*ibid.*, pp. 292—299) which has similar number speculation is his, there seems no *a priori* reason to discount the authenticity of this. It is worth noting that in this tract there are numerous errors in the interpretation of scripture, which makes it unlikely that it was composed by a learned theologian such as Anania of Narek,

THREE is the first perfect number. This idea finds its most obvious parallels in the Armenian Philo⁵. Of more specifically Christian interest is the interpretation of the three men who appeared to Abraham (Genesis, ch. 18) as indicative of the Trinity⁶. In early patristic exegesis this passage was explained

as "Miaban" supposed]; Elišē, *History = Vasn Vardany ew Hayoc' Paterazmin*, ed. E. Ter-Minasean, Erevan 1957, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, Venice 1859, *Questions et réponses sur la Genèse*, ed. N. Akinian and S. Kogian, Vienne 1928; John Mandakuni, *Čaṙk'*, Venice 1860; John of Odzun, *Opera*, ed. J. B. Aucher, Venice 1834; *Yačazapatum Čaṙk' ew Ałōt'k'*, Venice 1954. For Greek texts I have generally given references to J. P. Migne's *Patrologia graeca* as the most convenient source, without attempting to note all the more recent critical editions.

⁴ In the spirit of Origen's frequent insistence on number as symbol.

⁵ Anania, p. 240, quotes Philo as authority for this statement. The theme is common in Philo's *Questions*, e. g., *On Genesis* ii 5, iv 8; *On Exodus* ii 100.

⁶ See Anania, p. 241.

in terms of the Logos and two angels⁷, but by the fifth century the Trinitarian interpretation was standard⁸.

The significance of the "third hour" is elaborated by John of Odzun in his work on the Offices of the church⁹. It was at the third hour of the day that the first created man was captivated by the devil; that Daniel had his prophetic vision (a misinterpretation of Daniel 6.10); that the crucifixion and the descent of the Spirit occurred. In fact the gospel accounts of the crucifixion differ. Only Mark places it in the third hour¹⁰. But Aphraates, known erroneously in Armenian as Jacob of Nisibis, follows Mark¹¹. And the theme of the third hour as that of both the crucifixion and of Pentecost would be familiar to John from the Armenian version of Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Homilies*¹². John's ecclesiastical interests are also paramount in his comparison of Noah's ark and the church¹³. The spiritual figure does not interest him so much as the architectural: the ark had three storeys, and likewise the church has three sections, the sanctuary, the nave, the narthex (*gawit'*)¹⁴.

⁷ See J. Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, Chicago 1964, p. 138; G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, London 1964, p. 122.

⁸ See notably Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Julianum I* (P. G. 76.532—3).

⁹ *Opera*, pp. 212—214.

¹⁰ Mark 15.25, as opposed to Matthew 27.45 and Luke 23.44, who place it at the sixth hour. (The accounts are assimilated in Athanasius, *De virginitate* 12 (P. G. 28.265), by having the cross set up at the third hour, the crucifixion at the sixth and the death at the ninth.)

¹¹ Aphraates XII 12. Syriac text in *Patrologia Syriaca* I and II, Paris 1894 and 1907; Armenian text in A. Gallandi, *Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum*, vol. 5, Venice 1769, «Sancti Jacobi episcopi Nisibeni Sermones».

¹² XVII 19 (P. G. 33.992). Armenian version (*Koč'umn Encauyt'e'an*), Vienna 1832, p. 379. The Third hour was also celebrated as that of the last supper (Aphraates XII 6), and of the resurrection and the ascension (see J. Van Goudoever, *Fêtes et calendriers bibliques (Théologie historique 7)*, Paris 1967, p. 264).

¹³ *Opera*, p. 292.

¹⁴ For the storeys of the ark see R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, Cambridge 1975, pp. 253, 258. The parallel between ark and

The question of the three days that Christ spent in the tomb is discussed by Elišē. He is, however, unable to reconcile the three days and nights in the heart of the earth — like Jonah in the whale (Matthew 12.40) — with the resurrection on the third day after two evenings, one daytime and two hours. A solution to the problem was available in the Armenian Aphraates¹⁵.

Under the rubric FOUR all writers mention the four elements, either as earth, air, fire and water, or as the hot and the cold, the dry and the moist¹⁶. But only John of Odzun gives these four elements a religious significance: there are four psalms at evening prayer, "perhaps" in accordance with the four elements¹⁷.

There are also four virtues. John Mandakuni describes several groups of four virtues each: the basic four are silence, humility, the keeping of God's commandments, and tribulation. Then there are four virtues which preserve the soul: alms-giving, not becoming angry, long-suffering, and the keeping of oneself from wandering thoughts. There are four further virtues profitable to a young monk: meditation on the scriptures all the time, vigils and labour, obedience to the father, not considering oneself as anything at all. John Mandakuni then goes on to list various fourfold groups of vices which harm the soul, darken the mind and render the soul unfruitful¹⁸. Anania's list of four virtues, on the other hand, is that of the classical tradition echoed in the more philosophical reflections of the Greek fathers: the three parts of

church is an old theme of patristic exegesis; see J. Daniélou, *Primitive Christian Symbols*, London 1964, pp. 67—70; *idem*, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, Notre Dame (Indiana) 1966, pp. 82—85.

¹⁵ Elišē, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 301; Aphraates XII 7.

¹⁶ Anania, p. 241; Elišē, *History*, pp. 33—34, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 321; *Girk' T'i'oc'*, Tiflis 1901, p. 23; John Mandakuni, *Ca'k'*, p. 198; *Yacazapatum*, pp. 33—34, 170.

¹⁷ *Opera*, p. 54. Epiphanius, *Treatise on Weights and Measures, the Syriac Version*, ed. J. E. Dean, Chicago 1935, p. 52, associates the various manifestations of four with the four times of prayer.

¹⁸ *Ca'k'*, pp. 187—188.

the soul plus virtue (which is acquired and not natural)¹⁹. Anania also interprets the four rivers that flow from Paradise in a philosophical sense: the Phison is for us the image reason, the Gehon represents the overthrow of evil, in a manly fashion expelling effeminate debauchery; the Tigris is sobriety, warning against desire; the Euphrates is justice. Flowing from Paradise (i. e. the church), they irrigate the four extremities of the rational world²⁰.

The image of the church as the garden of Paradise leads Anania to consider the second Adam established in the garden of the church, who is preached by the four evangelists. The animals which represent three of the evangelists are then interpreted: the lion of Matthew is an image of royal power over death and hell; the ox of Luke is an image of the sacrifice on behalf of the world; the eagle of John represents the Word flying from the heights as if over prey, for where the dissolution of the body occurs, there the eagle descends. Anania then justifies these images by quoting Isaiah 31.4, adding that all parallels and images refer to Our Lord²¹.

The potentially most elaborate of the figures represented by the number four is that of the cross. The four-sided wood is mentioned by Elišē²², and in Agathangelos the theme of the four points of the cross receives extended treatment. Two main ideas are found in Agathangelos: the four directions of the points of the cross, and the four corners of the cross indicating an altar. The

cross also provides him with three other themes: it is an antitype to the tower of Babel, it is an antitype to wooden idols — and here Agathangelos introduces the concept of the dead Christ on the cross as a dead image — and it is an antitype to the ark. These themes are worth quoting in more detail.

(a) "The principal corner, the top, points upwards... elevating the nature of him who rested on it and indicating the Father... The right hand points to the joy of the just and the blessings prepared for them, while the left indicates the torments of sinners²³."

(b) "The horns of the altar (as in Psalm 117,27) are an indication of the cross which has four corners." "And the cross is truly an altar since it received the true sacrifice of the Lord's body." (The thought leads on naturally to a consideration of the eucharist²⁴.)

(c) "The tower is the cross... From the first tower was scattering, but from the cross gathering; from the one, expulsion to torments, from the other, approach to the kingdom²⁵."

(d) "Instead of the wood that men worshipped (after the tower of Babel), He set up his cross to send out light to all creatures sitting in darkness and the shadow of death²⁶." "Because men like to worship images in human shape skillfully carved from wood, he became the image of men in order to subject to his own image of his divinity the image-makers and image-lovers and image-worshippers. And because men were accustomed to worship dead and lifeless images, he became a dead image on the cross²⁷."

¹⁹ Anania, p. 241. Cf. Nilus, *Epistle I* 223 (P. G. 79.184): there are four virtues (φρόνησις, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη), and the devil has four vices, witness Zechariah 1.18.

²⁰ Anania, pp. 242–243. Elišē, *Questions*, p. 61, notes that the Phison is either the Ganges or the Danube, and the Gehon is the Nile.

²¹ Anania, p. 243; cf. Elišē, *Questions*, p. 12; Epiphanius, *Treatise on Weights and Measures*, p. 52; and Methodius, *De Resurrectione mortuorum*, II 10 (P. G. 18.316), referring to Origen.

²² Elišē, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 271. Cf. Nonnus, *Paraphrasis in Joannis evangelium*, 19 (P. G. 43.901): δόξω τετραπύκνιστον; and the Byzantine poem published in P. Maas, *Frühbyzantinische Kirchenpoesie*, Bonn 1910, p. 8: τετρακάρυον δένδρον.

²³ Agathangelos, § 489. For patristic parallels see the discussion to this paragraph in R. W. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, Cambridge (Massachusetts), 1970, p. 113. For the four corners of the earth reached by the cross cf. Maas, *Frühbyzantinische Kirchenpoesie*, p. 8: τετραπύκνιστον κόσμον. More elaborate is Severian, *Orationes in mundi creationem* V 3 (P. G. 56.474): the first letters of the Greek words for North, South, East and West spell "Adam".

²⁴ §§ 488, 490–491.

²⁵ § 629.

²⁶ § 585.

²⁷ §§ 80–81. For the theme of Christ as a dead image in later Armenian writers see S. Der Nersessian, «Une apologie des images au septième

(Again this leads Agathangelos to speak of the eucharist, Christ's body on the cross being food for the universe.)

(e) "The Lord saved Noah from the flood through the crosslike wood and worked salvation through the cross²⁸."

John of Odzun elaborates on the four-sided shape of the church as a building. The four sides recall the four corners of the world that has been called to worship God by the one Spirit in Christ. More allegorically, the East looks to Paradise and to the coming of the heavenly king and bridegroom. The window on the East represents the entrance of spiritual light into this world; while the windows to left and right represent the shining virtues, and that to the West represents the light of day²⁹.

Finally, the theme of the four-cornèred fishing net in Elišē deserves quoting. The idea of the gospel or the church as a net was common in Greek and Syrian writers³⁰, but Elišē has combined several numerical themes in his interpretation: "For the apostles are twelve in number and there are two cords to the net and four ends to the cords, by which in threes they take hold of each corner, for double three is perfect stability: one side to the West, the other parallel to it to the East, and two to the North and the South. With a circular spiral motion they enclose the whole world. The do not pull the net to each one's own side, but all together gather everyone to where the bait has been placed, for life and not death. For the

siècle», *Byzantion* vol. 17 (1944—1945), pp. 57—87, esp. p. 61 and note 15 (Reprinted in *Etudes byzantines et arméniennes*, Louvain 1973, vol. 1, pp. 379—403).

²⁸ § 169. The ark was widely used as a figure for the church, cf. note 14 above. But the emphasis on the cross in Agathangelos seems to point to an early stage in Christian exegesis, see Daniélou, *Theology*, p. 277.

²⁹ *Opera*, p. 300.

³⁰ E.g. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procatechesis* 5 (P. G. 33.344; not in the Armenian): "the nets of the church"; or Cyril of Alexandria in J. A. Cramer, *Catenae in Novum Testamentum*, vol. 2, Oxford 1844, p. 40: "the net of evangelism *μωταγωγία*". For Syrian parallels see Murray, *Symbols*, pp. 176—177.

food is living and is for those alive and not the dead. The sea is this world; the net the preaching of the Lord; the corners of the net the four gospels; the net-holders the twelve apostles; the prey all the races of the heathen; the bait the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ' and the method the true faith³¹."

The only one of the Armenian authors discussed in this article who offers religious interpretations of the number FIVE is Anania. The five senses are the site of the war of the passions³². (Anania does not enumerate the senses, but they are clearly: sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.) Therefore Moses wrote five books of law with which we combat the passions. David put five stones in his knapsack to oppose the foreign warrior (I Kings 17.40). Five cities of foreigners (*aylazgeac'*) were left in the promised land but subjected to tax, like the senses to the mind (cf. Joshua 16.10; 19.49). Anania then links this interpretation to Jesus' remarks about "five in one house divided three against two and two against three" (Luke 12.52). Anania interprets the "two" as sight and hearing, which are capable of spiritual understanding; whereas the "three" are the subject bodily senses of taste, smell and touch. Anania also introduces the five kings mentioned in Genesis 14.8—9; though he misinterprets the passage and thinks that it was the five, rather than the four of the same story, who captured Sodom. Sodom he interprets as "blindness", and Anania thus associates this passage with the bishops at the council of Nicaea who struck down the blindness of the heretics. (Anania does not speculate on the significance of the number of bishops present at that council, traditionally put at 318 after the number of Abraham's servants — Genesis 14.14³³).

³¹ *Matenagrut'iwkn'*, p. 338. For "bait" cf. Agathangelos, § 81.

³² Anania, p. 243. Cf. Athanasius, *Contra Gentes* 31 (P. G. 25.61—64), a classic exposition of this common theme.

³³ Cf. J. Rivière, «318, un cas de symbolisme arithmétique», *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale*, vol. 6 (1934), pp. 349—367.

The number SIX is primarily associated with concepts of time. The sixth hour was that of the crucifixion, therefore, says John of Odzun, one must be vigilant at that hour of prayer and beware of the demon of mid-day tedium³⁴. There were six days of creation, and Anania stresses the significance of the sixth, that of Man's creation. He also notes that Solomon in the sixth year finished the temple — a pattern of the first man. This temple Christ destroyed and by his resurrection raised a new, spiritual temple³⁵. (But as seen above, Anania was not a scrupulous biblical scholar: it was the second temple that was finished in the sixth year of *Darius* — *Ezra* 6.15; Solomon took seven years to finish his temple — *III Kings* 6.38.)

The most important idea involving six is that of the six ages of this world leading to the seventh, when the Lord will come again. *Elīšē* draws the customary parallel between the six ages of one thousand years during which this world is subject to corruption, and the six days of creation; the seventh day of rest thus prefigures the seventh age which will be free of corruption and evil³⁶. This idea receives greater elaboration in Agathangelos:

"(God) measured six thousand years of time for the evils and sweat of toils and travail of the world. He measured a thousand years for each day according to the first six days, in which might take place the growth of creation and the trials of the proving of the good. (For this Psalm 89.4 is quoted as authority.) In the first age was the beginning, and in the sixth was the renewal which he effected by his own coming. And in the same thousand will be the end, wherefore it is called the last, in which he is to come again . . .

³⁴ *Opera*, p. 216.

³⁵ Anania, p. 244. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* III 10 (P.G. 9.365) has an interesting explanation of six as the multiple of two and three; the two and three stand for male and female, and are echoed in Jesus' saying at Matthew 18.20: "where two or three are gathered together in my name . . .". The idea is found in Philo, cf. *Questions on Genesis*, iii 38. (For a different interpretation of "two" and "three" see above under "five".)

³⁶ *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 324.

And because he calls the seventh day of his own creation rest, therefore he commands the seventh day to be kept holy . . . For likewise in the seventh age he will give rest to the weary who have worked in the six ages of their time . . . The Spirit of God appeared in this sixth age to fulfill his predicted promises, the sayings through the mouths of the prophets. The grace of the Holy Spirit was poured out in the last times and was spread over the great variety of peoples³⁷."

Agathangelos is thus following the typology which has its origins in Judaism and is represented notably by Irenaeus: the seventh day represents the world to come³⁸. On the other hand, some early Christian writers saw the seven ages as representing the time of this world and the eighth day as the eternal rest³⁹. Only in Anania is there a reference to the eighth day. He does not elaborate, but indicates that the mystery completed by Christ was foretold by David, who gives the maximum length of our days as eighty years. This is a reference to Psalm 89.10⁴⁰. John of Odzun specifically states that Christ was crucified in the sixth age⁴¹.

³⁷ Agathangelos, §§ 668—671.

³⁸ See Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* V 28.3 (P.G. 7.1200; Armenian text ed K. Ter-Merkertschian and E. Ter-Minassiantz, *Irenaeus gegen die Häretiker*, Buch IV und V, Leipzig 1910). Cf. Methodius, *De Creatis* 12 (P.G. 18.344): the judgement will come in the seven-thousandth year; and Aphraates II 14. In general see A. Lunnau, *L'histoire du salut, la doctrine des âges du monde*, Paris 1964; and Daniélou, *Theology*, pp. 396—404.

³⁹ E. g. Barnabas XV. See in general A. Quacquarelli, «L'ogdoade patristica e sui riflessi nella liturgia e nei monumenti», *Rivista di archeologia cristiana*, vol. 49 (1973), pp. 211—269; and R. Staats, „Ogdoas als ein Symbol für die Auferstehung“, *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 26 (1972) pp. 29—52. See further note 55 below.

⁴⁰ Anania, p. 248. See also at note 89 below.

⁴¹ *Opera*, p. 216. Cf. John Malalas, *Chronographia*, ch. 10, Bonn 1831, p. 228, where Christ's birth is dated to 5500 years after the creation of Adam and his resurrection to the year 5533. An alternative tradition places Christ's birth in the year 6000, Ps. Amplilocius, *Vita Basilii* 2. Methodius, *De Creatis* 9 (P.G. 18.344), says that according to those skilled in arithmetic there have been six thousand years "up to now".

Two other ideas involving the number six deserve a brief mention. John of Odzun compares the six faculties with the six morning psalms; added to the four evening psalms, the total is the perfect number ten⁴². The faculties are the modes whereby the spiritual soul operates through the senses, but John does not elaborate. Anania notes that physical bodies have six positions (above and below, to right and left, behind and in front); but unlike some Greek writers he does not draw any religious significance from this⁴³.

Of all the numbers given special significance by our authors, SEVEN is the most frequently cited. But the biblical references to seven are not often given a symbolic religious meaning. The seventh day of rest and the seventh age of bliss have been discussed above. The next most common reference to seven is to the seven gifts of the Spirit. Quoting Isaiah 11.2, Elišē lists the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of understanding, the spirit of counsel, the spirit of power, the spirit of knowledge, the spirit of piety, and the spirit of the fear of God. This sevenfold distinction Elišē associates with the seven spheres of the heavens. In those spheres are two sets of seven bodies: the sun, moon and five planets, and the seven immobile stars⁴⁴. (Anania also mentions the seven wandering bodies, but in connection with the seven pillars in the house of wisdom and the seven senses⁴⁵.) Anania lists the seven gifts of the Spirit, but without further comment. But

⁴² *Opera*, p. 54.

⁴³ Anania, p. 244. Cf. Germanus of Constantinople, *In Crucem* (P. G. 98.244), where the six directions are related to the cross: it reaches towards heaven and below the earth, to left and right, and before and after in time.

⁴⁴ *Matenagrut'iwuk'*, pp. 321—322. Cf. Irenaeus, Ter-Mekertschian and E. Ter-Minassiantz, Leipzig 1907), who links the seven gifts with the seven heavens. Aphraates, I 9, speaks rather of the seven operations of the Spirit.

⁴⁵ Anania, p. 245. For the seven columns of the house of wisdom (as Proverbs 9.1), cf. Gregory of Nazianzen, *Oratio XLI* 3 (P. G. 36.432). Anania notes that there are many mysteries involving the number seven and refers to this "discourse on the Spirit" of Gregory's. (Its actual title, however, is "on Pentecost".)

John of Odzun with his interest in ecclesiastical ritual, describes the light of the candlestick on the altar shining with "sevenfold luminous grace"⁴⁶.

The significance of seven in the ages of children was a theme familiar to Jewish and Christian writers. Anania notes that the child conceived on the seventh day will be a son; children born in the seventh month will be healthy and fecund; teeth begin to grow in the seventh month; in the seventh year the mental aptitudes are advanced enough for children to start school; at twice times seven the reproductive powers are formed⁴⁷. Anania also notes several biblical parallels: the house of wisdom had seven columns (Proverbs 9.1); the ark was closed for seven days against the unbelievers (cf. Genesis 8.10, 12 — but the unbelievers had by then been drowned!); blood was sprinkled seven times before the altar; the leper was cleansed in seven days (Leviticus 14.38; cf. the dipping of Naaman seven times in the Jordan, IV Kings 5.14). Furthermore, evil is punished sevenfold — as Cain in Genesis 4.15, but Lamech seventy times (Genesis 4.24)⁴⁸.

John Mandakuni states that there are seven vices: fornication, love of money, envy, slander, jealousy, vainglory, pride. But he gives no special significance to the numeral seven⁴⁹.

In a more physical sense, Anania notes that there are seven apertures for the senses: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and one for taste through which the deadly (demon?) enters and the immortal rational (soul) leaves. There are also seven different kinds of human moisture: tears, nasal drip, sweat, menstruation, urine, bowel movements, seed⁵⁰. Elišē

⁴⁶ *Opera*, p. 304. Cf. Irenaeus, *Demonstration* 9 (with reference to Exodus 25.31—40).

⁴⁷ Anania, p. 245. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* VI 11 (P. G. 9.308), who refers to Jewish traditions; and Justin, *Quaestiones et responsiones* 69 (P. G. 6.1309—1312).

⁴⁸ But again Anania has misinterpreted the Armenian biblical text, which reads "seventy times seven". Here the Armenian and LXX differ from the "seventy seven" of the Hebrew and Syriac.

⁴⁹ *Čark*, p. 189.

⁵⁰ Anania, p. 245.

merely lists the seven apertures⁵¹, but he does note elsewhere that the five senses plus intelligence and (sexual?) desire are parallel to the seven coils of the snake as it crawls along⁵². The theme of the snake reminds Elishē (via Moses' bronze serpent, Numbers 21.8—9) of the crucified Christ. And thus we can say that Our Lord figuratively turned himself into the form of a snake⁵³. This is a common patristic theme⁵⁴.

The only specifically Christian interpretation of the number EIGHT is made by Anania. He comments on three O. T. references involving Solomon, David and Abraham: the eight (cubits) in the measurements of the temple (III Kings 7.10); the ogdoad mentioned in the titles to Psalms 6 and 11; and the covenant of circumcision to be performed on the eighth day (Genesis 17.12). In standard fashion this physical seal is then interpreted as having been rendered a spiritual one by Christ. The covenant was made by God because of Abraham's faith, as a token that the earth would not again be subjected to an immeasurable inundation as in the days of Noah. But Anania does not draw the Christian parallel to the flood — baptism⁵⁵. Nor in Agathangelos when the eight generations of patriarchs up to Noah is discussed, is any symbolism drawn out, either of the number eight in general or of baptism⁵⁶.

In interpreting the number NINE Anania merely compares the number of months Jesus

was in the womb (adding that this is the normal human term) with the nine beatitudes⁵⁷. Nor is any figurative interpretation offered by John of Odzun. He explains the "mystery" of prayer at the ninth hour by references to Peter and John going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour (Acts 3.1), and to the death of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27.46 and parallels). He also adds to the biblical text of Genesis by placing the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise (Genesis 3.23) in the ninth hour, parallel to Jesus' words to the thief (Luke 23.43), and by placing the sending of the raven from the ark (Genesis 8.7) in the ninth hour. As the raven brings death, so we receive the olive branch of life from the dove⁵⁸. Here John is following a long tradition of exegesis that contrasts the raven and the dove⁵⁹.

Finally the nine orders of angels deserve mention. They are ranked in Elishē, *Questions*; most notably, the "thrones" come at the end in the highest rank. Here Elishē is following the listing in Dionysius Areopagita, not that of Cyril of Jerusalem or of John Chrysostom⁶⁰.

⁵⁷ Anania, p. 246. John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in I Thess.* IX 2 (P. G. 62.449), notes that some people are born in the seventh, some in the ninth month — such is the uncertainty of life!

⁵⁸ *Opera*, pp. 218—222.

⁵⁹ Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De Baptismo* (P. G. 46.421). In general see Daniélou, *Bible and Liturgy*, pp. 81—82.

⁶⁰ Elishē, *Questions*, p. 11: angels, archangels, պատրիարք, զաբուրիս, տերութիւնք, էփանգելիս, Seraphim, Cherubim, thrones. From the lists in Ephesians 1.21 and Colossians 1.16 it is clear that the տերութիւնք are the *κυριότητες* and the զաբուրիս are the *δυναμεις*; but both պատրիարք and էփանգելիս can render either *αγγελοι* or *εξουσια*. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses* XXIII 6 (P. G. 33.1113; not in the Armenian — but see A. Renoux, «Une versionne arménienne des Catéchèses mystagogiques de Cyrille de Jérusalem?» *Le Muséon*, vol. 85 (1972), p. 147—153) and John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Genesin* Cap I, IV 5 (P. G. 53.44) have identical lists except for the placing of the "thrones" (in seventh place in Cyril, in fourth place in Chrysostom). If one discounts exact verbal parallels with the biblical lists, then Elishē's list could

⁵¹ *Matenagrut'iwok'*, p. 321.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 282—283, 322.

⁵⁴ See, for example, Barnabas XII 6, or Germanus of Constantinople, *Oratio 1, In vivificam crucem* (P. G. 98.229). In General see Daniélou, *Theology*, pp. 92, 271.

⁵⁵ Anania, pp. 245—246. Ps. Athanasius, *De Sabbatis et circumcissione* 5 (P. G. 28.139), states that the eighth day of circumcision signifies the regeneration of everything after the seven days. Cf. the idea of the eighth (not seventh) day as that of rest, note 39 above. For circumcision as a figure of baptism see G. W. H. Lampe, *The seal of the Spirit*, London 1967; and Daniélou, *Bible and Liturgy*, pp. 63—69. The earliest Christian parallel between baptism and the flood is found in I Peter 3.20—22, II Peter 2.5.

⁵⁶ Agathangelos, §§ 291—295.

The number TEN represents the rational sciences: it is the sum of one, two, three and four, which make a triangle. This mathematical commonplace is repeated by John of Odzun. He links it with the number of psalms recited at morning and evening prayer (six and four) and with the ten commandments⁶¹. Then in a physical sense ten represents the mind and the nine ways in which it operates through the body: the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and hands. Here too John is following a theme common to patristic writers, who added in various combinations the five senses (or the parts of the body through which they operate) to other physical and mental faculties⁶².

In a more spiritual sense ten is associated with the pascha and with Jesus' baptism. Anania notes that the Passover Lamb is to be taken on the tenth day of the first month and killed and eaten on the evening of the fourteenth (as Exodus 12.3). He also states that Jesus entered Jerusalem on the tenth day (the day of palms) and fasted until the fourteenth, until the evening of the last supper⁶³. Elišē elaborates more precisely on this, indicating that the sacrifice of Christ the true lamb of God is the sacrifice that saves everyone, Jew and Gentile⁶⁴.

Anania also brings out another typological parallel between the old and new dispensations. Just as the Hebrews crossed the Jordan on the tenth day (Joshua 4.19), so was Christ baptised on the tenth day. Here

render that of Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*, 7—9 (P. G. 3.205, 237, 257): angels, archangels, ἀγγέλαι, ἰζουσίαι, δόναμεις, κυρίστητες. Seraphim, Cherubim, thrones.

⁶¹ Opera, p. 52; cf. Anania, p. 246. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* VI 16 (P. G. 9.357), speaks of the decalogue as a "heavenly image" representing the sun, moon, stars, clouds, light, spirit, water, air, darkness, fire. Contrasted to this is the "earthly decalogue" of men, beasts, reptiles, animals, fish, whales, two kinds of birds, two kinds of plants.

⁶² John of Odzun, *Opera*, p. 52. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* II 11 (P. G. 8.985): ten represents the five senses plus speech, τὸ σπερματικόν, τὸ διαλογικόν and body and soul.

⁶³ Anania, p. 292.

⁶⁴ *Matenagrut'iwunk'*, p. 244.

we have a reflection of a common patristic theme, but not the earliest exegesis which saw the Old Testament type of baptism in the crossing of the Red Sea⁶⁵.

The number TWELVE is associated primarily with the apostles. As Elišē notes, it was not by chance that they were twelve; the number was revealed long ago in the Old Testament. Elišē lists three such indications: the twelve sons of Jacob (Genesis 35.22), the twelve rocks of Joshua ch. 4 (where the number is based on the twelve tribes), the twelve baskets of crumbs in the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand (Matthew 14.20 and parallels)⁶⁶. In another context Elišē speaks of the apostles and the twelve rocks who will build on the cornerstone dishonoured by the Jews⁶⁷. Agathangelos merely notes the parallel between the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles⁶⁸. And not surprisingly, John of Odzun is more interested in the sacerdotal parallels; the twelve gems in the high-priest's robe (Exodus 28.21), and the twelve stones of the temple⁶⁹. These last are not the twelve stones of Elijah's altar (III Kings 18.31—32). John obtains twelve by multiplying three by the four sides. And the three are not the three rows of stone in the description of Solomon's temple in II Kings 6.36; three here is rather a mystical number derived from the three types of the church: the ark, Solomon's temple and the temple restored by Zerubabel.

Elišē elaborates on the theme of twelve as applied to periods of time. Day and night

⁶⁵ Anania, p. 294. For Christian exegesis of the O. T. types of baptism see Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, London 1960, pp. 261—275.

⁶⁶ *Matenagrut'iwunk'*, pp. 327—328. It is noteworthy that no mention is made of the twelve springs of Elim (Genesis 15.27), often associated with the apostles (or the prophets, as Eusebius, *De ecclesiastica theologia* 3.3, P. G. 24.988). Aphraates, IV 6, explains the variation between eleven and twelve disciples, i. e. after Judas' apostasy and before the election of Matthias, by the eleven sons of Jacob mentioned in Genesis 32.22, and the twelve after the birth of Benjamin.

⁶⁷ *Matenagrut'iwunk'*, p. 257.

⁶⁸ § 612.

⁶⁹ *Opera*, pp. 298, 262.

have twelve hours, thus the twelve years' illness of the woman with an issue of blood (Matthew 9.20 and parallels) represents the sickness of this world. Likewise there are twelve sins: abandoning God; worshipping human artifacts; sacrificing to insensible beings; being indifferent to repentance; killing those (created) in one's own image; avarice — which is the root of bitterness; hatred — which is the unfruitfulness of the righteous part; stealing — which is the beginning of the ruin of this world; rapine — which provokes wars; hatred — which is the denial of God; pride — which is the destruction of souls and bodies; the fruit of death — which we inherited for corruption. In these twelve respects the world had fallen into sickness, physically and spiritually. Furthermore, men had looked up to the heavens and worked out in place of God an astral mythology based on the twelve stars. But through the twelve apostles the Lord healed the world, both men and time — the twelve hours and twelve months. Through the distribution of life by the twelve apostles, the following twelve benefits are seen: men are spurred to virtue; they speak truth instead of their former error; they work righteousness; they give godly fruit; marriage in purity; virginity; mercy; kindness to strangers; hope in God; true faith; love without doubting; instead of pouring out blood in impure sacrifices men shed their own as martyrs for the blood of Christ ⁷⁰.

The number THIRTY gives rise to two lines of thought: the meaning of the thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26.15, with reference to Zechariah 11.12), and thirty as the age of Adam and Jesus. Elijš explains the thirty pieces of silver as representing three tens associated with the Old Testament: the first ten represents the dishonouring of the ten commandments, the second ten the denial of Mosaic salvation, the third ten the disbelief in the promised land ⁷¹.

The age of Jesus as thirty (when he began his ministry, Luke 3.23) is explained by Ana-

nia as double that of maturity. For at fifteen one can beget one's kind, and at thirty be a grandfather ⁷². (This is somewhat at variance with the statement elsewhere in Anania that everything was created perfect and in full stature and maturity, thus man was thirty years old in paradise⁷³.) But although Anania contrasts such human begetting with the spiritual rebirth granted us through the divinely-begetting water and the Spirit, he has no further biblical or spiritual parallels to draw.

The number FORTY contains many mysteries, says Anania ⁷⁴, of which only a few examples can be given. Other than the forty cities of refuge (sic! — a misreading of Numbers 35.6—7), all Anania's examples are periods of time. He recalls the forty days of the flood (Genesis 7.12), Moses' forty days before the Lord when he received the ten commandments (Deuteronomy 9.25), Elias' flight of forty days from Jezabel (III Kings 19.8), the purification forty days after childbirth (Leviticus 12.2—4) as in the case of Jesus (Luke 2.22 ff.), who was both presented and presents us all through himself in a priestly manner to the Father. The forty years that Isaac remained unmarried (Genesis 25.22) are explained as necessary so that he might beget the promised offspring Israel by a chaste marriage ⁷⁵.

Elijš discusses Jesus' remarks about the temple (John 3.19 and parallels), noting that

⁷² Anania, p. 247. But for fourteen as the age of maturity see above at note 47. Aphraates, XXI 9, compares Christ's age at baptism to Joseph's thirty years when he stood before Pharaoh (Genesis 4.46). For the contrasting traditions which give Christ thirty or thirty-three years of life on earth see Goudoever, *Fêtes*, p. 288.

⁷³ Anania, p. 293. Cf. Ephrem, *Diatessaron* IV 1 (Armenian version ed. L. Leloir, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianum Orientalium* vol. 137, *Scriptores Armeniaci* 1, Louvain 1953): the thirty years show Christ's humanity. Elijš, *Questions*, p. 30, stresses that Adam and Eve were perfect (*katarealk'*). For the tradition that they were children see Murray, *Symbols*, pp. 304—306.

⁷⁴ Anania, p. 247.

⁷⁵ Cf. Aphraates, XVIII 6: as an illustration of the excellence of virginity Moses abstained from his wife for forty years.

⁷⁰ *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, pp. 324—327.

⁷¹ *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 250.

the temple was built in forty years, whereas God formed man in the womb in forty days and preserved the Jews in the desert for forty years. The reference to the desert naturally leads Elišē to the rock which gave water, paralleled in the rock which is the chief cornerstone (Mark 12.10 and parallels). But he does not elaborate on this extremely common theme of Christological exegesis⁷⁶.

John Mandakuni is more concerned with the ecclesiastical significance of forty. Noting that Moses and Elias both fasted for forty days, he emphasises the importance of keeping strictly the forty days of the Lenten fast, based on Jesus' forty days of temptation. In contrast to these forty days of suffering are the forty days of life celebrated from Easter to the Ascension⁷⁷.

The liturgical parallels of FIFTY are brought out by Anania. It was on the fiftieth day that we (Christians) received the Spirit and were freed from sin. This is our Jubilee as opposed to the old Jewish Jubilee every fifty years (Leviticus 25.10) when slaves were freed and possessions returned⁷⁸. John of Odzun uses the same term for the period between Easter and Pentecost⁷⁹. Anania states that fifty represents the day on which the transgressors received the rescript of death on the stone tablets. This perhaps represents the fifty days from the Exodus to the giving of the law, a period discussed by numerous Christian exegetes⁸⁰.

⁷⁶ *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 257. For the theme of the water from the rock see, for example, Daniélou, *Shadows to Reality*, pp. 193–197.

⁷⁷ *Čark'*, pp. 35 and 209–211, where elaborate rules for the fast are spelled out. For the fasts of Moses and Elias as types of Jesus' fast cf. Origen, *Fragmenta in Johannem* 79 (*Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller*, Leipzig, 4, p. 546).

⁷⁸ Anania, p. 248.

⁷⁹ *Opera*, p. 214.

⁸⁰ See Goudoever, *Fêtes*, pp. 189–205 for Jewish exegesis of the fifty days, and *ibid.*, pp. 251–253 for the Christian interpretation of Pentecost and the giving of the Law on the fiftieth day.

SEVENTY alternates with SEVENTY-TWO in Armenian exegesis, as in patristic writers⁸¹. Agathangelos refers throughout his *History* to seventy-two patriarchs, seventy-two tongues after the tower, and thus seventy-two disciples to evangelise the world⁸². The same parallel between 72 tongues and 72 apostles is made by John of Odzun⁸³. And Elišē, discussing the apostles, notes that the Spirit of God who inspired them also inspired Moses to appoint 72 elders⁸⁴. But elsewhere Elišē refers to the seventy⁸⁵. Anania says there were 70 elders, excluding Eldat and Meldat (cf. Exodus 24. 1)⁸⁶. His only other reference to 70 is an interpretation of the blessings of the Spirit as numbered by Isaiah, seven times the perfect ten⁸⁷.

Anania likewise interprets EIGHTY as eight times ten⁸⁸; it is thus for him a figure of the eighth day. As noted above, Anania is the only one of the authors discussed here to refer to the figure of the eighth day⁸⁹. Anania also adduces the eighty generations from the first to the second Adam in Luke's genealogy, i. e. a count of the names in the Armenian of Luke 3.23–38, including those of God and Jesus.

Only Elišē has an explanation of the ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THREE fishes of John 21.11. He divides it into three fifties plus three ones. The fifties are then interpreted as jubilees rescued by Christ from corruption,

⁸¹ See in general B. M. Metzger, "Seventy or seventy-two disciples?" *New Testament Studies*, vol. 5 (1958–1959), pp. 299–306.

⁸² §§ 503, 579, 612.

⁸³ *Opera*, p. 294.

⁸⁴ *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, p. 320.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

⁸⁶ These names are mystifying corruptions (?) of Nabad and Abiud. (Nabad in the Armenian for Nadab of the Hebrew, Syriac and LXX.)

⁸⁷ Anania, p. 248.

⁸⁸ Anania, p. 248.

⁸⁹ See note 40 above.

XIII

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ATHANASIUS IN ARMENIAN THEOLOGY

(A TENDENTIOUS VERSION OF THE *EPISTULA AD EPICTETUM*)

Athanasius enjoyed a high reputation among Armenian theologians. His authority was as great as that of Basil of Caesarea, the two Gregories of Nyssa and Nazianzen, Cyril of Alexandria or John Chrysostom, and he was invariably included in lists of orthodox Fathers and of those whose teaching refutes the impieties of Nestorius, Eutyches, Paul of Samosata and other heretics¹. Many of his works were translated, some in the earliest period of Armenian literature, and quotations from them figure prominently in catenae and apologetic writings. The value of these early translations for the study of the original Greek text was recognised long ago²; but it does not seem to have been noticed that the Athanasius known to the Armenians was different from the Athanasius familiar to modern Patristic students. He was known as one who had spent his life fighting the dyophysites, dedicated to the cause: «one nature of the incarnate Word».

From soon after Athanasius' death his works were handed down in two groups, the *Ἀπολογίαι* and the *Λόγοι*³. The former do not seem to have been translated into either Syriac or Armenian, nor are there Oriental versions of all the *Λόγοι*. On the other hand, a vast mass of spurious documents was attributed to Athanasius, and the Syriac and Armenian literatures abound in forgeries, both translations from Greek and original compositions. The history of these curious documents (which include a «vision» of Athanasius and the like) has not yet been written, but it was largely on the basis of such works that Athanasius' reputation in the East was founded.

¹ Cf. the frequent references to Athanasius as an authority in the documents in the *Book of Letters* (Tiflis, 1901).

² Cf. F. C. CONYBEARE, *On the Sources of the Text of St. Athanasius*, *Journal of Philology*, XXIV (1895), p. 284-299; J. LEBON, *Pour une édition critique des œuvres de S. Athanase*, *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique*, XXI (1925), p. 524-530.

³ The basic work on the Greek manuscripts of Athanasius' works is H.-G. OPITZ, *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung der Schriften des Athanasius* (*Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte* 23), Berlin, 1935; see esp. p. 142.

The *Λόγοι* circulated in collections rather than singly. In Armenian three *corpora* of Athanasian writings are known, but they bear no relation to the Greek *corpora*⁴. Like the only known collection of *Athanasiana* in Syriac⁵, they were compiled from individual versions already made and not translated as complete collections. This is clear from the diversity of style and vocabulary in the different items in these *corpora*, some being idiomatic and careful renderings of the Greek, others slavishly literal, and others paraphrases rather than direct translations. Some pieces exist in more than one version and the differences between these versions point to the contemporary tendencies and allegiances of the Armenian translators. One text in particular illustrates the changes which polemic considerations might effect, even in a genuine work. This is the version of the Letter to Epictetus found in the collection of *Athanasiana* published by Tayezi⁶. We are unusually fortunate with this letter in that a critical edition of the Greek has been made⁷ (though more Greek manuscripts have come to light since it appeared) and the Syriac version⁸ and the literal Armenian version⁹ have also been published. So we are able to assess the idiosyncrasies of the Armenian and isolate individual characteristics. The entire letter is also included in the *Seal of Faith*¹⁰, a

⁴ These are described by R.P. CASEY, *Armenian Manuscripts of Athanasius*, *Harvard Theological Review*, XXIV (1931), p. 43-59.

⁵ Cf. R. W. THOMSON, *The Text of the Syriac Athanasian Corpus*, in *Biblical and Patristic Studies in Memory of R.P. Casey*, Freiburg, 1963, esp. p. 252-253.

⁶ Ա. Աթանասի Ժողով, Venice, 1899, p. 324-343.

⁷ G. LUDWIG, *Athanasii Epistula ad Epictetum*, Jena, 1911.

⁸ The text is in the Ms. British Museum Add. 14557 and has been published by P. BEDJAN, *Nestorius, Le Livre d'Héraclide*, Paris, 1910, p. 577-593. Cf. J. LEBON, *Altération doctrinale de la Lettre à Épictète de S. Athanase*, *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique*, XXXI (1935), p. 713-761. The Syriac text with English translation of the *Ad Epictetum* will be included in the first volume of my *Athanasiana Syriaca* to appear this year.

⁹ Published from the two Vienna corpora 629 and 648 by R.P. CASEY, *An Armenian Version of Athanasius' Letter to Epictetus*, *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVII (1933), p. 127-150.

¹⁰ Հիփո Հաւանոյ, Ejmiacin, 1914, p. 57-70. Cf. H. JORDAN, *Armenische Irenaeusfragmente (Texte und Untersuchungen, 36. Band, Heft 3)*, Leipzig, 1913, p. 108-120; J. LEBON, *Les citations patristiques du «Sceau de la Foi»*, *Revue d'Histoire ecclésiastique*, XXV (1929), p. 5-32; G. GARITTE, *La Narratio de Rebus Armeniae* (CSCO 132, Subsidia 4), Louvain, 1952, p. 277.

seventh century catena of Julianist tendency, and this text is very close to that published by Tayezi. It does, however, show signs of having been worked over, and a few deliberate alterations may be discerned. As it appears to be secondary to the other Armenian text, its particular variants will be noted after the more important divergences from the Greek of both copies have been set forth.

Tayezi's version has been described as « loose and paraphrastic »¹¹. In fact the whole text is an adaptation of the Greek rather than a strict translation, which makes it impossible to give a collation of the two. So the most notable divergences are given below in quotation. These quotations are typical in that they show how the original Greek (for the Armenian bears no relation to the Syriac) has been expanded; the extra length of the Armenian text was obtained not only by the stylistic device of using two or more words to render one of the Greek, but primarily by the insertion of new material. The translator had regard only to the general sense of the Greek and reset its periods as he fancied, elaborating some ideas and more rarely omitting a few phrases. So any theological tendency in the Armenian which diverges from the thought in the Greek text is not to be attributed to an unknown Greek manuscript which may have served as the translator's original, but to the translator himself. This is all the more certain as the other Armenian translations of the whole text and the Armenian version of Timothy Aelurus' quotations (in his *Widerlegung*)¹² render faithfully the known Greek text.

Here follow the major differences of the Armenian. The English translation has been made from Tayezi's text and the Greek references are to the pages of Ludwig's edition and the columns of J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 26.

- (1) § 2. (Ludwig 4.10-5.1; P.G. 26.1052C-1053A; Tayezi 326.17-32)

ταῦτα δὲ νόθον ... οὐσία τῆς σοφίας :

But this fire of wrath, whence has it come and sprung forth, or what Hell has belched forth to say that the body from Mary and the Word of God are one nature, or that the Word changed into flesh and bone or in every way

¹¹ CASEY, *An Armenian Version*, p. 128.

¹² Timotheus Älurus' *Widerlegung*, ed. K. TER-MEKERTTSCHIAN und E. TER-MINASSIANZ, Leipzig, 1908. Cf. F. CAVALLERA, *Le dossier patristique de Timothée Aelure*, *Bulletin de Littérature ecclésiastique*, XI (1909), p. 342-359.

into the nature of a body, or was altered from his own nature? Or who has heard in the church or amongst all the believers that the Lord put on falsely the likeness and nature of our body? And <who> has been so impious as to say or suppose that the nature of the divinity, which was equal with the Father, was circumcised and became imperfect from perfection; and that what was nailed on the cross was not the body, but the very creative nature which was the wisdom of the Father?

- (2) (Ludwig 5.11.12; P.G. 26.1053B; Tayezi 327.20-21)

ὁ ἐκ Μαρίας ... τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστιν:

. . that He who was born of Mary, Lord and Son, is equal with the Father according to the nature of the essence of the Godhead . .

- (3) Ludwig 5.14-15; P.G. 26.1053B; Tayezi 327.24-26)

ὥστε εἰπεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν ... μὴ εἶναι Κύριον:

. . so that they said of Christ, whose body suffered and was crucified, that He is not Lord . .

- (4) § 4. (Ludwig 8.6; P.G. 26.1057A; Tayezi 330.12-13)

τροπήν + and corruptibility.

- (5) § 5. (Ludwig 8.19; P. G. 26.1057B; Tayezi 331.3)

ὁμοιον ἡμῖν σῶμα:

a body of our nature.

- (6) (Ludwig 8.20; P.G. 26.1057B; Tayezi 331.5-7)

τοῦτο λάβη καὶ ὡς ἴδιον:

. . take the body of our nature from her and uniting it with the Word as his own . .

- (7) (Ludwig 9.19-22; P.G. 26.1060A; Tayezi 332.14-22)

ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ περιμηθέντι ... τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασιν:

But it appeared that it was the same true nature, the body which was circumcised and taken in arms (by Simeon — cf. Lk. 2.28), and which ate and drank and laboured and was nailed on the wood of the cross and suffered; and in the body was the impassible and incorporeal Word of God. This was the body which was placed in the tomb, and with it was God the Word who preached the deliverance and remission of sins to the spirits . .

- (8) § 6. (Ludwig 10.6-10; P.G. 26.1060B; Tayezi 333.5-10)

καὶ τοῦτο Θωμᾶς ... ὁ Λόγος ὁ ἀσώματος:

And this body risen from the dead Thomas touched, and saw in it the places of the nails; but the Word Himself remained impassible, although He saw his own flesh being nailed, which He could have prevented — the nails and the sufferings of his own body — and He Himself was the invincible and impassible Word.

- (9) (Ludwig 10.11; P.G. 26.1060B; Tayezi 333.13-14)

καὶ ἀψαντος ὧν τῇ φύσει

and the untouchable and incomprehensible nature of the Word, considering as his own the condition of his own body . .

- (10) (Ludwig 10.13-14; P.G. 26.1060C; Tayezi 333.16-19)

ἃ γὰρ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ... εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀνέφερεν:

. . because the Word's own body suffered, the Word who was united with the body considered it all as his own.

- (11) (Ludwig 10.18-11.4; P.G. 26.1060C-1061A; Tayezi 333.26-334.16)

καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν ... τὸν Ἀπόστολον εἰπεῖν:

And the Incorporeal Himself was united to his passible body, and the impassible Word of God had the body united to Himself. He erased and destroyed the weakness of the corruption of the body's nature and clothed the body with incorruption. And having done this, and taking the body which was from us into union with Himself, bringing immortality to mortals by the immortal (Word), and offering his body as a sacrifice, He erased and destroyed death from the body and clothed the mortal with immortality. For the mortal could not restrain the immortal in death; but the immortal eliminated death, and uniting the mortal with the immortal made it immortal. And giving us through his own body such immortality, He lets his Apostle say . .

- (12) § 7. (Ludwig 11.6-8; P.G. 26.1061A; Tayezi 334.20-20)

ὥς τινες πάλιν ... σωτηρία ἐγένετο:

. . as some of the heretics say that the body was a likeness and not nature; but our Saviour really became a true man, and the Word of God united to Himself all our nature and granted salvation to the whole and complete nature of man.

- (13) (Ludwig 12.10-11; P.G. 26.1061C; Tayezi 336.3-6)

ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἔχων ... εἶναι πιστευθῇ:

But the Word Himself was in his body, united to the same flesh of ours both before death and after the resurrection; and thus was clearly preached to all believers by the Apostles.

- (14) § 8. (Ludwig 12.13-16; P.G. 26.1061C; Tayezi 338.7-15)

τοῦ γὰρ σώματος ... ἐν σαρκὶ γενομένου:

For the body was united to the Word, and the divinity of the Word and the body were not one nature, but it was truly born from the holy Mother of God, Mary; and it was not that the Word of God was altered and changed into a body, but the Word was indissolubly united to his body which He took from the Virgin; and the uniting (συνῆλθε) shows the indissolubility and unity of the natures.

- (15) (Ludwig 13.1-2; P.G. 26.1064A; Tayezi 338.26-29)

ἀλλ' ὅτι ... γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος:

. . but because the Word of God, taking a body for our sake, united it to Himself and became man; for this reason it was said that «the Word became flesh.»

- (16) § 10. (Ludwig 16.9-15; P.G. 1068 A; Tayezi 340.11-31)

ναὸς δὲ ... γέγονεν ἄφθαρτος:

The body of God the Word suffered, and was filled and united with the Godhead of the Word. And the only begotten Son of God reckoned the sufferings of his body as his own, and was Himself unaffected and impassible in his own suffering body. Therefore the sun, seeing his creator, that is the Word, being crucified and the Lord's body being insulted, restrained the light of his rays and made the whole land dark. And again (regarding) the body of the Word of God which was a mortal body by nature; the Word who was in the body made his own body immortal and incorruptible above the nature of the mortal body, and united it <to Himself> and extirpated from the body natural death and corruption. Because the Word of God put on and united <to Himself> a body which was above human nature, therefore the corruptible body became an incorruptible body, and death was conquered in the nature of a mortal body, because by the Word of God life reigned in it.

- (17) § 12 (Ludwig 17.18; P.G. 26.1068C; Tayezi 341.36)

ἄνθρωπος + perfect.

These quotations give an indication of the way in which the Armenian translator has rehandled his material. Although the Greek style of this letter is compressed in comparison with some of Athanasius' more discursive writings, it is clear that the expansions in the Armenian do not serve a merely literary purpose, nor do they only elucidate obscurities in the text. They take up and stress certain ideas which the translator considered important. What are these ideas?

The Word is equal with the Father in nature and essence¹³; He is by virtue of this divine nature impassible and incorruptible¹⁴. But the body was a true body born of Mary, and was no likeness or phantom¹⁵. This body and the Word Himself are not of the same nature¹⁶, therefore the Trinity is not made a Quaternity. The Word did not change into a body¹⁷, thereby becoming altered from his own nature (which is divine); rather He united the body to Himself, and considered its bodily affections and sufferings as his own¹⁸. This union of the two natures, of God the Word and the truly human body, is indissoluble¹⁹.

The first proposition needs no demonstration. Athanasius' whole theology has as its basis the unity of the Trinity; the Son and the Holy Spirit are God, not created beings but co-eternal, co-essential and consubstantial with the Father. The testimony of the *De Incarnatione*, the *Contra Arianos* and the Letters to Serapion is conclusive.

The Word took a truly human body. This again is one of the cardinal points in Athanasius' theology, the corollary of the perfect divinity of the Logos. For at the basis of Athanasius' doctrine of redemption lies the understanding that if the body which the Word assumed had not been really human, of our *φύσις* or *οὐσία* (Athanasius considered these terms synonymous), then man would not have been saved. Redemption had to come from within man's nature and could not be effective if merely imposed on it from without.

¹³ Cf. quotations 1 and 2 above.

¹⁴ Cf. quotations 11 and 16.

¹⁵ Cf. quotations 1, 12 and 14.

¹⁶ Cf. quotations 1 and 14.

¹⁷ Cf. quotations 1 and 14.

¹⁸ Cf. quotations 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

¹⁹ Cf. quotation 14.

Only one expression in the Armenian of the *Ad Epictetum* betrays a non-Athanasian expression in this particular connection. In § 12 to the phrase ἐκ δὲ Μαρίας αὐτὸς ὁ Λόγος ἐαντῷ σάρκα λαβὼν προήλθεν ἄνθρωπος is added «perfect» (...δὴμι δωρη ἡνωτηρη). Athanasius never used this expression²⁰; it occurs in the printed text of the *De Incarnatione et contra Arianos* (P.G. 26.996 C), but is the result of an interpolation in many Greek manuscripts. All the versions (Armenian, Syriac, Latin) omit ἄνθρωπος τέλειος as do the Greek manuscripts A B F K W Z c²¹.

The humanity of Christ being thus assured, Athanasius thought that it would be quite ridiculous to suppose that the body of Christ was a phantom or illusion. For example, in the *De Incarnatione*, § 18, he wrote : ὅταν τοίνυν ἐσθίοντα καὶ πίνοντα καὶ τικτόμενον αὐτὸν λέγωσιν οἱ περὶ τούτου θεολόγοι, γίνωσκε ὅτι τὸ μὲν σῶμα, ὡς σῶμα, ἐτίκτετο καὶ καταλλήλους ἐτρέφετο τροφαῖς... (περὶ τούτου is omitted by the Syriac version). Nor could it be said that the Word *was* the body or had turned into the body. For Athanasius, the divine and the human are radically opposed. The body is not the Word; if it were also divine there would be a Quaternity in place of the Trinity.

So far the elaborations of the Armenian text have been in accord with Athanasius' own ideas. But the same cannot be said of the stress laid on the Word's *uniting* the body to Himself or of the *union of the two natures*. Athanasius was never so precise in defining the connection between the Word and the body as our Armenian version would have us suppose. He spoke generally in vague terms : the word took (ἔλαβε, συνεστήσατο, πλάττει, κατασκευάζει) a body from the Virgin; He put it on (πεφόρηκεν, ἐνεδύσατο) and dwelt in it (ἐνοικεῖ, συνῆν) as if it were a temple (ναός), and used it as an instrument (ὄργανον)²². Somewhat more precise is the expression συναφή (*Contra Arianos II*, PG.

²⁰ Athanasius did use the expression τελείωσιν of the body of the Word (c. *Arianos*, III, § 22), but ἄνδρα τέλειον in the same paragraph is a quotation from Eph. 4.13 and does not refer to Christ Himself (cf. c. *Arianos*, II, § 74).

²¹ Cf. THOMSON, *Text*, p. 257.

²² These expressions are too frequent in Athanasius for complete references to be given here; see the various entries in G. MÜLLER, *Lexicon Athanasianum*, Berlin, 1944-1952.

26.296 B)²³, but to Athanasius *ἰδιοποιεῖσθαι* was more congenial. He uses this word frequently both of the body directly (e.g. *De Incarnatione*, P.G. 25.109 C and D) and of the properties of the body (e.g. *Contra Arianos* III, P.G. 26.393 B; *Ad Epictetum*, P.G. 26.1060 B).

What is particularly instructive, however, is the number of expressions describing the junction or union of the Word with the body found in books which are generally included among Athanasius' works, but which are almost certainly not by his own hand. In the fourth book of the *Contra Arianos*, for example, we find *σύναψις* (P.G. 26.501 B) and *συναφθείς* (P.G. 26.517 B) used of the union between Word and body. This term also occurs in the *Contra Apollinarium II* (P.G. 26.1145 B), but Athanasius himself only used it of the connection between men and the Father or Logos (e.g. *De Incarnatione* P.G. 25.140 A). Similarly the terms *ἔνωσις* or *ἐνωθείς* only occur in spurious works, the *Contra Arianos IV* (P.G. 26.524 B), the *Contra Apollinarium I* (P.G. 26.1100 A) and the *De Incarnatione et contra Arianos* (P.G. 26.996 C). (These last two works are probably to be ascribed to disciples or close followers of Athanasius)²⁴.

Therefore when the Armenian version stresses repeatedly the union of Word and body and mentions the union of the two natures, it is clear that the translator (or perhaps he should rather be titled adaptor) was influenced by the later development of this term. It was not until after Athanasius' death that the widespread use of this expression began to cover conflicting dogmatic positions. Irenaeus' phrase *ἔνωσις... καθ' ὑπόστασιν φυσική*²⁵ was taken up by Cyril of Alexandria. According to him, the humanity and divinity of Christ united to form a *ἐνότης φυσική*, although in normal speech and to mortal understanding the divine and the human are incompatible. This *ἐνότης φυσική* or *ἐνότης καθ' ὑπόστασιν* was sharply opposed by Cyril to the *ἔνωσις κατὰ συν-*

²³ But in the *De Incarnatione*, § 17 (P.G. 25.125 C), Athanasius denies that the Λόγος συνεδέδετο τῷ σώματι; he adds: *μᾶλλον αὐτὸς ἐκράτει τοῦτο, ὥστε καὶ ἐν τούτῳ ἦν*.

²⁴ Except once in the *Ad Epictetum* § 9. But it was clearly not a technical term for Athanasius since he combined it with *κοινωνία*.

²⁵ Fragment 28, P.G. 7.1244 C.

ἀφειαν²⁶, the expression preferred by the Antiochenes, and the classic expression of his mode of thinking is the *μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σαρκακωμένη*. This Cyril made his own, mistakenly supposing the *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi* from which it was taken to be by Athanasius²⁷.

Both Cyril and the Antiochenes could refer to the two *φύσεις* of the one Christ, but there was a basic difference between them in their understanding of the meaning of *φύσις* and the relation between the *ἔνωσις* (or incarnation) and the two natures. Both recognised the full divinity and full humanity of Christ, but in opposition to Cyril's conception of a hypostatic or natural union of the two, Theodoret, for example, denied that two natures could be so joined. For the refutation of those who said that the divinity and humanity were one nature he composed his *Eranistes*, where he wrote in no uncertain terms : *μία δὲ φύσις πρὸ τῆς ἐνώσεως ἡγουν σαρκώσεως ἦν, μετὰ δὲ γε τὴν ἔνωσιν, δύο λέγειν προσήκει, τὴν τε λαβοῦσαν καὶ τὴν ληφθεῖσαν*. Theodoret's position rested on the basic assumption that Christ is *Θεὸς φύσει καὶ ἄνθρωπος φύσει*. But Athanasius had always been careful to say only that Christ took human nature upon Himself or to employ kindred expressions; he never said Christ is human by nature. His guarded references to the divine nature of the Word were reinforced by the explicit declarations in the forgeries attributed to him. So, secure in the assumed authority of Athanasius, Cyril proclaimed the *μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σαρκακωμένη* and later monophysite writers followed his example. Yet the Antiochenes could also claim Athanasius' authority, for he had used *συνάφεια*²⁸, the favourite expression of Nestorius.

The expressions « united » and « union of the two natures » were thus employed by both sides in the Christological controversies, but the variants in the Armenian text of the *Ad Epictetum* tend towards the interpretation of Cyril's. It seems unlikely that

²⁶ Cf. *Epistola* 17, *anathema* 3 (P.G. 77.120 C) and *Homilia Paschalis* 17, § 3 (P.G. 77.784 A).

²⁷ In the *De recta Fide ad Reginas*, quoting from the *περὶ σαρκώσεως Λόγου* attributed to Athanasius (P.G. 76.1212 A).

²⁸ But unlike *συναφή* or *συνάψις*, *συνάφεια* was only used by Athanasius of the union between the Logos and the Father (*De Sententia Dionysii*, P.G. 25.504 D; also in the (pseudo-) *c. Arianos*, IV, P.G. 26.492 B). The Arians assumed a *διάστημά τι μεταξύ τῆς συναφείας* (*De Synodis*, P.G. 26.733 B).

the translator would have introduced his tendentious emphasis on the indissoluble union of the two natures until this had become a serious theological issue in Armenia, yet the term « united » in a Christological context was not unknown to the early Armenian theological tradition. It occurs in the *Teaching of Gregory* which is probably to be dated before Chalcedon, but there is usually coupled with the more common word « mingled »²⁹. A little later John Mandakuni (Catholikos 478-490) wrote in his discourse on the Trinity : « God became man... the Word and the man were united in the flesh and divinity, the Word being God by essence (ըստ էութեանն) »³⁰. He echoed the same thought in his *Demonstration*, defining the nature of the Word as the divinity³¹. John composed this *Demonstration* to prove that one could only speak of one nature in Christ after the union; the humanity of Christ might be called human nature, but Christ is a single person³². He therefore did not distinguish between φύσις and ὑπόστασις in the manner defined at Chalcedon. The influence of Cyril is most noticeable in the title of this work, but Cyril is not mentioned personally. His name is quoted as an authority only after the first council of Dvin (505)³³.

Although the term « united » was traditional in Armenian theology, not until John Mandakuni do we hear of « two natures ». As for the expression « union of the two natures », it first occurs in the anathemas composed by Abdisho after his consecration as bishop in 555³⁴. If, then, the Armenian translator was deliberately altering his original, as seems impossible to doubt, he was doing so to gain a show of authority for expressions which had but recently gained currency. Since it was not until the council of 505 that the Armenian

²⁹ The *Teaching* forms the longest section of the history of Agathangelos; cf. G. GARITTE, *Documents pour l'étude du Livre d'Agathange* (Studi e Testi 127), Vatican, 1946; R. W. THOMSON, *Some Philosophical Terms in the Teaching of Gregory*, *Revue des Études arméniennes*, N.S. I (1964), p. 41-46. In the *Teaching* the terms միացաւ and խառնեաց occur frequently (e.g. § 369, 385, 515, 592, 679) and the combined expression խառնեաց միացոյց ընկղմեաց զմարմինն յկառուածութեան իւրում in § 378.

³⁰ *Եովհաննու Մանդակունոյ ճառք*, Venice, 1850, p. 213.

³¹ *Book of Letters*, p. 33.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67, 68.

church found its rallying point in a national theology of monophysite tendency and such expressions were officially adopted, it is unlikely that this adulterated translation of the *Ad Epictetum* was made before that date. It was certainly in circulation before the next century when an adapted version of it was included in the *Seal of Faith*.

The Armenian version of the *Ad Epictetum* represented by the texts in Tayezi (T) and the *Seal of Faith* (K) is totally dissimilar from the literal translation found in the two Armenian corpora of *Athanasiana* (A and B — Vienna 627 and 648), but one difference in terminology has some relevance to the present discussion : this is the way in which *οὐσία* and *ὁμοούσιος* are rendered. Where *οὐσία* stands alone, all four texts translate it by *բնութիւն* (e.g. Ludwig, 5.2; 9.15; 14.2); this term is also used for *φύσις* (Ludwig, 4.13 etc.). Since for Athanasius *οὐσία* and *φύσις* were synonymous, no obscurity arises from the single term in Armenian. Where the Greek has *οὐσία* and *φύσις* together, then both Armenian versions distinguish them in the same way : *բնութիւն* and *էութիւն*. At 5.12 *բնութիւն* stands in place of *οὐσία* and *էութիւն* for *φύσις*, while at 17.18 the reverse is the case; but this is not significant, for in Armenian there were no fixed equivalents for these Greek technical terms (though *էութիւն* generally stood for *οὐσία* or *ὑπόστασις* rather than for *φύσις*). The important difference between AB and TK is in the way they render *ὁμοούσιος*; the former employ *միասնական* (4.11; 7.4; 8.8 etc.) or *համարեական* (4.16). This latter is a literal translation of *ὁμο-ούσιος*, while *միասնական* was a traditional Armenian term. But TK render *ὁμοούσιος* by *մի բնութիւն* (one nature) and occasionally by *հաւասար* (equal), or by both terms together. At 14.8 it is translated by TK as *մի բնութիւն եւ էութիւն*; but since Athanasius is here referring directly to Nicea, the expansion is probably due to a reminiscence of the Nicene creed and anathemas. In general when TK wish to translate *ὁμοούσιος*, the Greek is converted and becomes « one nature of the body and the Word » (4.11) or « one nature of the Word and the Father » (7.15). This periphrasis is most unusual; in Armenian *ὁμοούσιος* was rendered by a variety of words but the Greek phrasing was retained, so this variant reflects a conscious alteration. It seems most likely to have been adopted by a translator familiar with the Cyrillian *μία φύσις*

and it fits in well with the general tendency of the variants in TK discussed above.

The version of the Letter to Epictetus in the *Seal of Faith* is basically the same as that published by Tayezi, but it has not suffered so much in transmission (though neither text is free from corruptions). However, there are a few passages where K has tendentious variants from both the Greek and the Armenian of T; these variants appear to have arisen as deliberate alterations to a previous Armenian text similar to T rather than to reflect a separate translation from the Greek. Since the compiler of the *Seal of Faith* was a theologian of the Julianist persuasion, it is not surprising to find that these variants concern the problem of the suffering of Christ.

The first of these variants is the most revealing. In § 2 K reads : (Ludwig 5.2; P.G. 26.1053 A; Tayezi 327.2; Seal of Faith 59.11) « Who heard it said that not from Mary but from his own nature the Word changed and made for Himself an *impassible* body...? » In § 6 (quotation no. 8 above, Seal of Faith 63.25) before the Armenian of Tayezi « and He Himself was the invisible and impassible Word », K adds : « and He was able to prevent the sufferings of his body or not prevent them, but He counted and considered as his own the sufferings of his own body ». The first phrase is exactly parallel to a fragment of Julian preserved in Severus' *Apologia pro Philalethe*³⁵; the second phrase may be paralleled in the Armenian of T (quotations 9 and 10 above) and here may be simply an expansion of the Greek *ἰδιοποιεῖτο τὰ τοῦ σώματος ἴδια ὡς ἑαυτοῦ*. But the force of the expression « considered as his own » is much weaker than Athanasius' own words and may echo another idea of Julian's — the willingness of Christ to accept the sufferings implied by the incarnation, rather than the necessity of such suffering as a consequence of the human nature He took. The variant in § 6 (quotation 10 above), where instead of « the Word's own body suffered » K reads : « because the body suffered in the Word », is a curious inversion of the thought expressed just below by Athanasius : *καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν ὁ ἀσώματος ἦν ἐν τῷ παθητῷ σώματι*.

These alterations to the already tendentious version of the *Ad Epictetum* suggest that apologetic or polemic considerations might

³⁵ No. 77 in R. DRAGUET, *Julien d'Halicarnasse*, Louvain, 1924, p. 27*; cf. also p. 188.

prevail over strict faithfulness to the original texts and accuracy in copying them. We must now turn to later Armenian dogmatic works to see how these texts were respected, and which renderings proved most suitable for the purposes of their authors.

*
**

The Armenian tradition concerning the translation of Athanasius' works is preserved in a colophon of unknown origin³⁶. It states that seventeen treatises were rendered into Armenian by « the first translators » and a further five by Stephen, bishop of Siunik, at the order of John Odznetsi. These five are : the *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi* (P.G. 28.25) ; the *Ad Jovianum* (P.G. 28.532) ; the *Quod Unus sit Christus* (P.G. 28.121) ; the Homily on John 12.27 (P.G. 26.1240) ; and the *Contra Apollinarium II* (P.G. 26.1132). It has been suggested that these were translated as part of the preparation for the synod of Manazkert³⁷ ; as the works of Julian of Halicarnassus were translated for that council³⁸, the suggestion is plausible. However, it seems that the evidence of this colophon may be questioned. The fact that the seventeen translations attributed to the « first translators » betray differences of style and idiom, and that some must be placed no earlier than the seventh century, does not of itself invalidate the tradition of the colophon, as, in Casey's words, « it seems likely that they were texts current in Armenia before the eighth century, which a natural but mistaken enthusiasm assigned to the golden age of Armenian literature »³⁹. More serious, however, is the fact that three of the translations supposedly made by Stephen are quoted in Armenian before he became bishop of Siunik and before John of Odzun became Catholicos.

³⁶ It is quoted by G. ZARBANALIAN, *Catalogue des anciennes traductions arméniennes* (Հայկական թարգմանութիւնք նախնեաց) Venice, 1889, p. 287, but he gives no indication from which Ms. he took it. The colophon is reproduced in translation by Casey (*Armenian Manuscripts*, p. 52-53) and the order of the treatises mentioned in it compared to the three known Armenian corpora (*ibid.*, p. 55).

³⁷ CASEY, *ibid.*, p. 53, note 21.

³⁸ According to the letter of Photius; cf. GARITTE, *Narratio*, p. 284-285.

³⁹ CASEY, *Armenian Manuscripts*, p. 57.

John's predecessor but one, Sahak III (Catholikos 678-705), composed a treatise against the dyophysites, a lengthy work of importance not only for the views of Sahak, who supported the Julianist ideas on the ἀφθαρσία of the body of Christ, later opposed by John, but also for the very large number of quotations from « orthodox » fathers, Greek, Syrian and Armenian. There are nineteen reminiscences of Athanasius in this letter, but not all can be paralleled with known Greek texts. Of most interest for our present purpose are the following ⁴⁰ :

1. *Ad Jovianum*, P.G. 28.532B, πρῶτον μὲν ... πολέμιος. ⁴¹

There are the following variants:

μετ' αὐτῆς θεϊκῶς: Theotokos

διὸ καὶ ... ἡ ἁγία Μαρία omitted.

This is not the same text as the Armenian found in Tayezi (T) or the two corpora in Vienna (A and B), nor is this passage quoted in the *Seal of Faith* or by Timothy Aelurus.

2. *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi*, P.G. 28.25A-28A, ὁμολογοῦμεν δὲ εἶναι ... μίᾳ προσκυνῆσαι ⁴². The Armenian is very different from the Greek and from the text in T A B and Timothy; it seems to have been conflated with part of the *Quod unus*, P.G. 28.125C. It reads: "We confess him to be God and the Son of God according to the Spirit, and the son of man according to the body; not two natures, nor two persons, nor two adorations, but one nature and one person of the incarnate Word of God, with one adoration".

3. *Contra Apollinarium II*, P.G. 26.1148C, καὶ ἐγεννήθη ἐκ γυναίκος ... μορφῆς τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ⁴³. This is different from the Greek and from the Armenian of T A B; it is not quoted in the *Seal of Faith* or Timothy. It reads: "God the Word was born of a woman to establish the first created form of mankind in himself; he was revealed in the body without human will and human mind, for an image of renewal, in the will of the deity only, because the whole nature of the Word was in the manifestation and form of human flesh."

4. *Ad Arianos IV* (?) ⁴⁴. This has its closest affinities to § 6-7 of the *Ad Arianos IV*, but is not the same text. The *Ad Arianos IV* is not in T A B,

⁴⁰ Sahak's letter is preserved in the *Book of Letters*, p. 413-482. Cf. E. TER-MINASSIANZ, *Die armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu den syrischen Kirchen (Texte und Untersuchungen, N.F., 11. Band, Heft 4)*, Leipzig, 1904, p. 136-142,

⁴¹ *Book of Letters*, p. 442.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 443.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

nor is it quoted in the *Seal of Faith* or Timothy; nor is this piece identical with the Armenian *Contra Arium* (P.G. 28.440; Tayezi 134) or the short *Ad Arium* (Tayezi 235). It reads: "The blessed Athanasius says in his fourth treatise to Arius: The Word had again the weakness of the body as his own, for his was the body, the co-worker of divine deeds, for it was by him because it was the body of God; and again: if the works of God the Word were not done through the body, then the body would not have been deified; and again: because he effected the work of the Father through the body"

5. *Ad Adelphium*, P.G. 1081B, *χεῖρα γούν ... τὸν Λάζαρον*. This text omits *γούν σωματικὴν* ⁴⁵. T A B have a different Armenian translation of the same underlying Greek text.

6. *Ad Epictetum* ⁴⁶. This extract from the *Ad Epictetum* does not come from the Greek text, but can be compared with the altered text of § 10 quoted above: "The Word who was in the body ... therefore the corruptible body became an incorruptible body." However, this last phrase is altered in Sahak's quotation to read: "Therefore the body which was from corruptible things, became incorruptible." This quotation does not agree exactly with either the known Armenian versions or the text in the *Seal of Faith*. This latter composition, however, is only known in one manuscript; it is quite possible that the copies circulating in the seventh and eighth centuries had significant variants among them.

7. *Contra Apollinarium I*, P.G. 26.1105A, *καὶ ὅπερ Ἀδὰμ ... ἀνέδειξεν* ⁴⁷. There is no Armenian translation of the complete work, though it is quoted in the *Seal of Faith*. This passage does not agree with the Greek. It reads: "Adam cast the sinless flesh into condemnation and corruption, but Christ showed it incorruptible and insusceptible of death and saving for mortals. Death was not able to destroy the spirit of Christ, nor was corruption able to take captive his body ... (the three last lines are illegible).

8. *Quod Unus sit Christus*, P.G. 28.124C, *καὶ ἐχώρησαν ... καὶ ἔσχατον* ⁴⁸. Here the Armenian follows the Greek, only omitting *καὶ συνθέσεως*. But compared with the three Armenian versions of the complete work, there is one interesting difference. Instead of *անձնադրութիւն* (hypostasis) Sahak always writes *ենթակայութիւն* ⁴⁹. The former is the traditional expression, the latter was invented in the Philhellene period of translation.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 452.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 453.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 470.

⁴⁹ In the letter of Photius this term is equated with *ηϛδ* and *անձն*, while in a commentary inserted before the text of the Armenian reply, *ենթակայութիւն* is equated with *դոյազդութիւն* and *բնութիւն*, while the phrase « unity hypostatized (*ենթակայացեալ*) in one personality »

Although at first sight the fact that Sahak quotes from works of Athanasius which Stephen of Siunik is said to have translated seems to invalidate the claim of the colophon, yet closer investigation shows that in no case did Sahak use the text of any of the known Armenian versions. Therefore these translations as they have come down to us may still be attributed to Stephen, while the problem of Sahak's sources remains unsolved. The mines of Patristic quotations already available in Armenian, the *Seal of Faith* and Timothy Aelurus' *Widerlegung*, do not contain these particular extracts, with the exception of that from the *Ad Epictetum*. But as we have just seen, here also Sahak was not quoting from the text as we now have it. The problem of the source of these Athanasian quotations seems linked to the question of Sahak's sources in general; further light may be thrown on it when the provenance of all of Sahak's citations is discovered.

It is noteworthy that later Armenian authors usually repeated well known quotations in their apologetic works, borrowing large sections from previous writers. So one is not surprised to find that Stephen of Siunik, quoting the same four extracts from the *Contra Arianos* and the *Ad Adelphium*, follows them with the same quotations as Sahak from Gregory of Nyssa, Julius of Rome, John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, etc.⁵⁰ We are not here concerned with Armenian quotations of Athanasius in general, but rather with the fate of the *Ad Epictetum*; yet it would be misleading to consider quotations from this one work in isolation, for the very reason that once a quotation became fixed in a catena or authoritative letter (such as Sahak's or Stephen's) it was nearly always copied from that catena without reference to the complete and original text. The *corpora* of Armenian *Athanasiana* existed alongside these collections of quotations, but neither influenced the other.

Further evidence for such borrowing comes from the letter of the Catholicos Khatchik (972-991) in reply to the accusations of

is applied to the unity of Logos and flesh (the Armenian texts, edited by A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, in *Pravoslavnyi Palestinskii Sbornik*, XI (1892), p. 179-226. On Photius' letter, see GARITTE, *Narratio*, p. 370-375).

⁵⁰ In his letter to Germanos of Constantinople, *Book of Letters*, p. 373-395. These four quotations are on p. 377. Stephen also gives the same quotation as Sahak from the *c. Apollinarium II* (p. 379 = Sahak quotation no. 3 above) but begins four lines earlier at *διὰ τοῦτο ἡλθεν*.

heresy levelled at the Armenians by the Metropolitan of Sebastea. This letter has been preserved by Stephen of Taron and is one of the most valuable documents for a knowledge of contemporary Armenian dogmatics. All the quotations from Athanasius included in the apology, save one, are taken from the letters of Sahak or Stephen (the sole exception being from an apocryphal discourse on the Nativity)⁵¹. The quotation from the *Ad Epictetum* does not exactly follow Sahak's version or that of Tayezi, but agrees word for word with the text of the *Seal of Faith*. This interesting fact shows that Khatchik and his vardapets might borrow the schema of their quotations from one writer and the text from another.

The last text to be considered in this connection is the *Root of Faith*, as yet unpublished⁵². It contains selections from the Bible and from Greek, Syrian, Latin and Armenian authors. A work entitled Հարսնաբանութիւն was attributed to Anania of Narek by the historian Oukhtanes, but this cannot have been the *Root of Faith* as we have it, for the latter contains quotations from Nerses of Lambron (who is referred to as the last Armenian Catholicos). Although no copy of Anania's work now exists, it was suggested by Jordan that it formed the basis of this fuller version⁵³. This

⁵¹ Stephen (Ասողակ) of Taron, ch. 21. Unfortunately I could find no copy of the Armenian text, but the quotations are easily recognisable from the translation of F. MACLER, Paris, 1917. The quotations are: p. 87 of the French text, from the « c. Apollinarium » (a mistake in the Armenian for the *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi*) quoted by Stephen, *Book of Letters*, p. 375; p. 89 from « On the Birth of Christ », full text in Tayezi, p. 258-263, this section on p. 260; p. 92 from « The Epiphany » (i.e. c. *Apollinarium II*) quoted by Stephen p. 379; p. 96 from c. *Arianos IV* and *Ad Adelphum*, quoted by Stephen p. 377 and Sahak p. 449 (quotations 4 and 5 above); p. 100 from c. *Apollinarium I*, quoted by Sahak p. 453 (quotation no. 7 above); p. 101 from *Ad Epictetum*, quoted by Sahak p. 452 (quotation no. 6 above); p. 106 from *Quod unus sit Christus*, text in Tayezi 56-63, this section on p. 59 (cf. Sahak p. 443, quotation no. 2 above).

⁵² Three manuscripts are known: Paris 153, Vatican 31 and Ejmiacin 1500 = 1538, now 2080. I am grateful to the authorities of the Bibliothèque Nationale and of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana for providing me with microfilms of this text. On the *Root of Faith*, see H. JORDAN, *Irenaeusfragmente*, p. 160-63; for a description of the Vatican Ms., E. TISSERANT, *Codices Armeni Bibliothecae Vaticanae*, Rome, 1927, p. 51-53.

⁵³ JORDAN, *Irenaeusfragmente*, p. 161, note 3.

is not very likely, however, for Anania was not unfriendly to the Byzantine church⁵⁴, whereas the *Root of Faith*, like the *Seal of Faith*, is of pronounced monophysite tendency. Its title gives the tenor of the collection: « Book of consolidation and root of faith and reply to the Arians; for the heretics say that the divinity was not united to the body, but they confess the divinity separate from the body. God forbid that the orthodox should think anything similar, but they must courageously bring forward as witness the prophets and gospel and apostles, and with frankness reply to the dyophysites. » Furthermore the *Root of Faith* is devoted to the refutation of those who supposed that the body of Christ was corruptible, a further indication of the continuing influence of Julianist ideas.

This catena contains eighteen quotations from Athanasius⁵⁵. After the last (from the *Ad Epictetum*) the compiler added a most revealing interpretation of Athanasius' condemnation of those who say « one nature », explaining how Athanasius, that « lifelong champion of the monophysites », intended this phrase to be understood.

1. *Ad Jovianum*, P.G. 28.532B *μὴν τοίνυν ... πολέμος*.

The Armenian title reads: "From the letter to the emperor Claudius(!)" and the text is very different from the Greek.

"We confess one will, we say rather one nature and hypostasis of the Word, perfectly incarnate. And who does not say thus, fights with God and against the holy Spirit and the holy fathers."

2. *Ad Jovianum*, P.G. 28.532B *πρῶτον μὲν ... ὁ αὐτός*.

"First the Lord was with the Virgin divinely, then the same (came forth) from her. Who says two natures or two persons, worships a Quaternity instead of the Trinity."

3. Unidentified: "Just as it is impossible to say that a king and the purple are two kings, so it is impossible to say that God the Word and his body are two natures."

4. *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi*, P.G. 28.28A *ἀλλὰ μίαν φύσιν τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένην*. The Armenian title reads: "Apology against Apollinarius." This is not the title in the complete Armenian versions (T A B), but Stephen of Siunik quotes "one nature of the incarnate Word of God"

⁵⁴ Cf. the preface by J. MÉCÉRIAN to I. KÉCHICHIAN, *Grégoire de Narek, le Livre de Prières (Sources chrétiennes 78)*, Paris, 1961, esp. p. 20, 24.

⁵⁵ Paris 153, ff. 30b-35a; Vatican 31, ff. 113a-116a.

under the title "Letter to Apollinarius" (*Book of Letters*, p. 375). The Armenian text differs from the Greek.

"But according to all the divinely inspired testaments, one nature of the incarnate Word of God was declared."

5. Unidentified: "He did not say that the Word became God, but he said that the Word is God. God always existed, he says, and the same God became flesh, that the flesh might become God the Word, according to Thomas who called his flesh 'Lord and God'. Therefore we confess one nature of the Word of God who became flesh, and the body is worshipped by the angels; not like the Arians who say that they are different."

6. Unidentified (but cf. *Ad Adelphim*, § 5, P.G. 26.1077D):

"But he says that the body of the Spirit was born from the Virgin. Who divides the Word from the body, denies the grace which was bestowed by him on us, because the blessed Stephen saw the same body at the right hand of the Father. Therefore we do not say that the Word is outside the body for you to worship. At the time of the crucifixion the earth shook because the Word was united to the body on the cross."

7. *Quod unus sit Christus*, cf. P.G. 28.124C-D. The quotation is entitled "Against the Samosatene," the usual title in Armenian for this work, but the text differs from the Greek.

"Who understand two natures in Christ after the union, wish to call the Lord a slave and make the Trinity a Quaternity, because one must understand and say 'one nature of God the Word incarnate.' And if any one says they are different, he is anathema."

8. *Quod unus sit Christus*, cf. P.G. 28.125C. The order of the Greek is inverted in the Armenian.

"We know Christ born from the seed of David; the same they called God, the same man, the same Son of God, the same son of man, the same from heaven, the same from earth, the same passible (and impassible); not different, nor two persons, nor two natures."

9. *Ad Adelphium*, P.G. 26.1081B. This is a conflation of the quotation from the *Ad Adelphium* and the last of the three from the *Ad Arianos IV* found in Sahak's Letter (nos. 4 and 5).

"The works of the Father he effected through the body, because with his hand he raised the one ill with fever, and with his voice the dead. For the light of the divinity shone out in the mutable body, and in the same was the child who had sprung from the womb, pure and immaculate; and the incomprehensible who had left the heights of divinity was with him."

10. *De Incarnatione Dei Verbi*, P.G. 28.25A-28A, ὁμολογοῦμεν δὲ εἶναι ... σαρκαρκομένην. This follows Sahak's quotation (no. 2) rather than the Greek or the complete Armenian versions.

"For we confess that he is God and Son of God according to the Spirit, and son of man according to the flesh; one nature and one person of the Word of God who became man."

11. *Ad Epictetum*, cf. the version of § 10 found in Tayezi (quotation no. 16).

"The Word who was flesh, above the nature of mortal flesh made his body immortal and incorruptible, for the Word of God put on and united to Himself the body.

12. *Against Arius*. This is similar to the quotation which Sahak (nº. 4) attributes to the *Contra Arianos IV*. But here only two of the three short quotations are combined; the third goes with the quotation from the *Ad Adelphium* (no. 9 in the *Root of Faith*.)

"The Word had the weakness of the flesh as his own, because the body was his, and by it were the divine works accomplished. Because if the deeds of God the Word were not done though the body, he (i.e. man) would not have become God."

13. Unidentified: "Because the spittle was divine, although it had human power for healing; and the human feet walked divinely on the sea, because the Word was united to the body without confusion or division."

14. *Contra Apollinarium II*, cf. P.G. 26.1148C. This quotation is entitled « Manifestation »; the usual title of this work in the Armenian versions is "Concerning the saving manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Armenian does not follow the Greek exactly.

"The body of the Saviour had a divine will only after the union, and the human mind disappeared from the divine body at the incarnation of the Word."

15. *From the Saying of Peter the Apostle*. Unidentified⁵⁶: "The suffering of Christ in the body was not the suffering of the nature of the Word Himself, but of the nature of the body. But if the body was in another, then the suffering must be attributed to another. But if the Word became flesh and the body was the Word's, then one must say that the sufferings are the Word's, because on account of the indissoluble union the Word considered the sufferings of the body as his own. Opposed to 'why do you strike me?' he also said: 'I turned my back on the blows'".

16. Unidentified: "They babble who say that the sufferings were of his divinity. Because God did not suffer through the body but through God, the sufferings were in the body. But because of the Word united to Himself, he considered the sufferings of the body as his own. But he was free from sufferings as a man, and being by essence God (and therefore) immortal, he willingly accepted death and suffering."

17. Unidentified: "When the Word accepted his body, he bore it as his

⁵⁶ A commentary on the two Epistles of Peter attributed to Athanasius is found in the Armenian Ms. Erevan 1408 and is described by H. A. ANASYAN, *Հայկական Մատենադարանի թղթեր*, Part I, Erevan, 1959, col. 360.

own and not as if by force. And he teaches you hunger and thirst which (he endured and) after forty days gave up."

18. *Ad Epictetum*, P.G. 26.1052C, ποῖος ἄδης ... Λόγου θεότητι. This is the same version as that found in Tayezi (quotation no. 1).

"Whence came and sprang forth this fire of wrath, or what hell has belched forth to say that the body from Mary and the Word of God are one nature?"

To these distorted quotations the compiler (or perhaps an earlier gloss) has added a commentary on the last :

"One must understand wisely this saying, why saint Athanasius said it. Do not think that he has undertaken to invalidate what he built up earlier against the dyophysites and that he opposes himself and establishes two natures, against which he combatted all his life. God forbid! But it was necessary to place this saying here, that you might know why Athanasius said that one must not say 'one nature of the Word and body,' because the ignorant hear this, who do not understand the meaning of the remark and say the opposite, like the dyophysites, that Athanasius anathematised those who say 'one nature.' Now Valentinus and Marcion and Eutyches and many others said that the Lord brought his body from heaven, and others that the Lord moved as a phantom on earth, and others that the body existed before the coming into being of the world, that it was with the Father, equal to the Word and co-eternal with him, and that the Word and the flesh were one nature. But Athanasius says against them: The holy Fathers in Nicaea said that the Word was equal to the Father, and defined the Word and the Father as one nature. And afterwards He took a body from the Virgin and united it with Himself ineffably. So all the holy Fathers said that (if) there is one nature of the Word and flesh before the taking (of the body) from Mary then it would have been superfluous to mention Mary and to say that He was born from her or to say that there was any necessity for Him to bring the body from heaven and to put on a second nature of man from Mary. He could not be in the body without being born from Mary, nor could He put on his own nature twice. Again the heretics say that when we say 'one nature of the Word and flesh before He took it from Mary' then the Trinity remains (intact). But if we say that He took the body from Mary, in place of the Trinity a Quaternity is made, from which they wish to flee in ignorance. With the same ignorance they thought that there was one nature of the Word and flesh before the world was created, and that it was co-eternal and equal to Him. Oh, you wicked ones, who speak of a Quaternity! How do you say that the body of the Word was associated with and equal to the Father before the birth from the holy Virgin and not younger in time than the Word, and that He did not take it from Mary the Mother of God in the last (days)?"

The transformation of Athanasius is now complete. The struggle with the Arians has been replaced by the struggle with the dyophysites; the cause of the divinity of the Logos and his unity with the Father has been replaced by the cause of «one nature of the Word incarnate» and the union of the human and divine in one nature. Although there existed undistorted versions in Armenian of Athanasius' dogmatic works, they went unheeded by the theologians concerned with defending orthodoxy against the heretical «Nestorians», but this is not a feature unique to Armenian writers. In Byzantium and the other Oriental churches the authority of the Fathers was more often felt at second hand than directly; their works were not widely studied, but commentaries and abbreviations, universal encyclopaedias and collections of purple passages were the books perused and assimilated by lesser mortals, each copying his predecessor. For Athanasius' own thought one had recourse not to his own works but to the compendia of Patristic quotations. Once started this practice gained fatal momentum.

Only the first translators of such tendentious versions as that of the letter to Epictetus discussed above can be accused of deliberate fraud; and in the sixth century few had such strict ideas of literary propriety as are fashionable today. Sahak, Stephen, Khatchik and the compiler of the *Root of Faith* were victims of a universal tendency; they accepted the doctored texts in good faith, but the cumulative effect of such credulity was disastrous. The honest convictions of these Armenians who clung tenaciously to the traditional faith were based on distorted premises. To what extent such frauds encouraged the perpetuation of mutual misunderstanding between the Armenian and other churches is a question beyond the scope of our present enquiry, but a study of the sources on which Armenian theologians based their interpretation of tradition may explain some of the inconsistencies in their claims to represent that tradition.

Additional Note: For quotations of Athanasian Texts in Armenian see also M. de Durand, 'Citations patristiques chez Etienne de Taron', *Armenica. Mélanges d'études arméniennes*, Venise 1969, 117-118, and R.W. Thomson, 'Quotations from Athanasius in the *Root of Faith*', *Armenian and Biblical Studies*, ed. Michael E. Stone, Jerusalem 1976, 182-203.

THE ARMENIAN VERSION OF PS.-DIONYSIUS AREOPAGITA

The purpose of this paper is not to elucidate the mystery of the real author of the corpus of writings ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, but to describe the Armenian version of those works and to offer a few comments on their influence on Armenian authors.¹

There are well over one hundred Armenian manuscripts that contain a translation of the Ps.-Dionysian corpus – that is, all or part of the treatises: On the Heavenly Hierachy, On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, On the Divine Names, On Mystical Theology, the Letters.² There were in fact two Armenian renderings of these works: One by Stephen of Siunik' in the early eighth century, and one by Stephen of Poland (Step'anos Lehats'i). The latter was a seventeenth century monk who translated several texts from Latin into Armenian.³ He was prompted to translate Dionysius again because of the obscurity of the earlier rendering. But it is with this first translation, by Stephen of Siunik', that the present paper is concerned.

Armenian tradition – both in the manuscripts of Dionysius and in the historical texts – is unanimous in attributing the first translation to Stephen of Siunik', bishop of that province before his death in 735. There is, however, one Armenian text composed before the eighth century that has quotations from Dionysius, namely the *K'nik Hawatoy* (*Seal of Faith*) which is often ascribed to Komitas, Catholicos from 615 to 618, but which may well, in its present form, be a somewhat later composition.⁴ The *Seal of Faith* is a florilegium containing extracts from numerous Greek and Armenian theological writings. But the quotations from Dionysius evince a text quite different from that of the corpus in the manuscripts. The short excerpts in the *Seal of Faith* were translated directly for that florilegium, either from a full Greek text of Dionysius or from a Greek florilegium. So they have no relevance for the study of the translation attributed to Stephen of Siunik' – though, of course, they are of importance for the study of the influence of the theology of Dionysius in Armenia.

Stephen's scholarly activities and travels are mentioned by several Armenian historians, beginning with Moses Daskhurants'i (whose work re-

ceived its present form at the turn of the eleventh and twelfth centuries).⁵ But only in the fourteenth century is the translation of Dionysius' works explicitly described. According to Stephen Orbelean the translation of Dionysius was made in Constantinople at the urging of the consul David, who himself explained obscure passages.⁶

It may be worthwhile to give here the gist of Stephen Orbelean's account of the travels of Stephen of Siunik', which is somewhat lengthier than earlier accounts.⁷ Stephen of Siunik' was prompted to go abroad to learn Greek and Latin and to study philosophy because he had been worsted in a theological debate with a pro-Chalcedonian Armenian prince. Following the pattern of earlier Armenian scholars, he went to Athens and Constantinople. Athens, by the eighth century, was hardly a great centre of philosophical study; but I do not wish to raise here the question whether Stephen Orbelean really thought that his hero went there, or whether Athens had become part of the traditional grand tour attributed to earlier scholars, and was really only a literary *topos*. The scholarly activity of Armenians abroad was solidly rooted in historical fact, but many legendary accretions distort the picture in individual cases – as with Moses Khorenats'i's travels to Egypt.⁸ In Constantinople Stephen of Siunik', though originally denounced as a heretic, mollified the emperor and made the acquaintance of the patriarch Germanos, who gave him a letter to take back to Armenia. (Stephen's later response will be mentioned below.) At this time, with the encouragement of the consul David, Stephen translated writings by Dionysius and Gregory of Nyssa. Titles are not given by Stephen Orbelean, but colophons attribute the rendering of the *De Opificio Hominis* to Stephen of Siunik'.⁹ Then the emperor sent him to Rome to find books that enshrined the true, orthodox faith. Reaching there, Stephen found works by Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasius and Epiphanius; but he returned directly to Armenia.

Stephen's activity as translator is also mentioned by the 13th century historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i, but he does not refer specifically to the translation of Dionysius. However, Kirakos does note that the famous mystic poet Gregory of Narek (d. 1010) wrote homilies in the style (*och*) of Dionysius.¹⁰ But Gregory of Narek makes no explicit reference to Dionysius in his prayers or homilies.¹¹

As noted above, there are more than one hundred Armenian manuscripts containing all or part of the Dionysian corpus, of which more than half have the version by Stephen of Siunik'. I am not at the moment in a position to describe the relationship of all these manuscripts to each other, as I have not yet seen most of them. The comments that follow are based on an analysis of the two earliest manuscripts. These are Matenadaran 49 and 167 in Erevan. The former was written in 1282 and corrected soon thereafter by the renowned grammatical scholar Isaias Nch'ets'i, abbot of Gladzor. The second manuscript, Matenadaran 167,

is not dated; but it was commissioned by the same Isaias and was perhaps written at the monastery of Halbat.¹² It may, of course, turn out that these early manuscripts are untypical; it is not unknown for much later manuscripts to have preserved a better text. But at least one can say that we have the text of Dionysius as known and used in the late thirteenth century. From before that time only scattered fragments and quotations, a few quite long, survive in Armenian.

These two manuscripts are related in that Isaias corrected the one (Mat. 49) from a manuscript with a text very close to, but not exactly identical with, the other (Mat. 167). It is the latter which is the more faithful to the Greek text, although both have errors explicable only from corruptions within an Armenian tradition or confusion of Armenian letters.¹³ Before the corrections introduced by Isaias, Matenadaran 49 generally had an inferior text. For example, it follows the Armenian biblical text in the quotation from James 1.1 that opens the treatise on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, rather than the text of Dionysius; and it has clear corruptions within an Armenian context.¹⁴ But since Matenadaran 167 is not without mistakes, the readings of 49 are significant. And more importantly, since 167 has been damaged, especially at the top or bottom of the page, the lost passages can be restored from Matenadaran 49.

Narrowing the field even further, I should also say that my collations are restricted to the first item in the Dionysian corpus, the treatise on the *Celestial Hierarchy*. The reason is not because this is the first item in the Armenian manuscripts, but rather because we have a critical Greek text of this treatise – unlike the others – so that comparison between the Armenian and Greek textual traditions is easy.¹⁵ For there is no question of the Armenian having been made from a Syriac version. The Armenian never agrees with a Syriac text against all other Greek manuscripts; it is a very literal translation of the original Greek.¹⁶

The Greek manuscript tradition of the Dionysian corpus falls into two main groups: one is closer to the original text but full of grammatical errors; the other reflects a revision by Byzantine grammarians, who corrected the grammar and orthography.¹⁷ The later manuscripts that do not belong to either of these groups but reflect a mixed text are not relevant for the Armenian version made in the early eighth century. The oldest example of the first group of Greek manuscripts, Parisinus 437, was given by the emperor of Constantinople Michael II to Louis the Pious in 827. Very closely related to this is a tenth century manuscript, the Valli-cellianus 69 in Rome. These are conveniently known as M and Va respectively. It so happens that in ch. 4, par. 2 of the *Celestial Hierarchy* these two manuscripts have a striking misplacement of several lines, attested by no other Greek manuscript or the Syriac, but followed by the Armenian. This is a sure indication that the Armenian text was rendered from a Greek manuscript reflecting a Constantinopolitan text, as tradition claims.

Elsewhere also Armenian follows other idiosyncrasies of M or Va (or both). For example in I 2 ἐνδότητος is rendered by *miut'iwn* ("unity"), as M and the Syriac; and in III 3 the Armenian follows MVA in reading *διάδοσω* in place of *μετάδοσω*. On the other hand the Armenian does not have all the errors or omissions of MVA. Thus in II 3 it includes the phrase ἐπὶ τῶν ἀοράτων; in II 4 it reads ἔξω; and in III 2 it does not have the addition αὐτοτέλειος found in M. The Armenian translation (though not the surviving Armenian manuscripts) predates the earliest surviving Greek manuscript, so the actual manuscript or manuscripts used by Stephen of Siunik' cannot be identified. However, it is clear to which general text type the Armenian translation belongs.

The two Greek manuscripts M and Va do differ in that Va contains the scholia on Dionysius attributed to Maximos and M does not. Since these scholia are also found in the Armenian text, clearly we should look to Va – or rather, to an earlier manuscript from which Va was copied in the tenth century – for the origin of the Armenian rendering. But it should be noted that the Armenian manuscripts do not name the author (or authors) of the scholia.

The two thirteenth century Armenian manuscripts on which the present investigation is based differ with regard to the scholia. Matenadaran 49, written in 1282 and corrected by Isaias Nch'ets'i, integrates the scholia into the text in order to make a continuous running whole. On the other hand, Mat. 167, commissioned by the same Isaias, clearly separates the scholia from the text in traditional fashion by placing the scholia in a separate column and by using a somewhat smaller script. A later hand has added some additional notes, usually very brief, that are not found in Mat. 49. But the tradition of Armenian scholia to the Dionysian corpus and their relation to the Greek of Va remain to be investigated.

The Greek text of Pseudo-Dionysius is not the most limpid prose imaginable, nor do the obscurities become any clearer in the Armenian rendering. Indeed, the translation is done in that very literal fashion commonly known as "Hellenizing" where the word order of the original is followed very closely – regardless of whether that would be natural Armenian order – and where compound words are broken down into their component parts, each part is translated separately, and then they are reassembled.¹⁸

However, it is only fair to point out that Stephen in his rendering of the Greek has not always slavishly translated it by a one-to-one equivalent in Armenian. To take some examples, just from the first few chapters of the *Heavenly Hierarchy*. According to context ἀνάγω can be rendered by *elanem*, *veraberem* or *veranam*; and ἀναγωγή is *imanalit'sut'iwn* (spiritual vision) or *verambardzut'iwn* (elevation). Οἰκεῖος can be *ink'ean* (self) or *entani* (family). Ὑπερουράνιος is *erknayin* (heavenly) or *ger i veray k'an zerkins* (above heaven). Σύμβολον is *nshanak* or *awrinak*.

Conversely, *awrinak* can render σύμβολον or αἶνιγμα. *Kartsem* can render οἶομαι or φαντάζω. *Kerparan* can render ἀπεικόνισμα, μόρφωμα or μόρφωσις. *Nmanut'iwn* renders ἀφομοιώσις, μίμησις or ὁμοιότης. It is not necessary to prolong the list in order to indicate that the Armenian is not entirely mechanical.

Stephen made several mistakes in his translation. But we must remember that the Greek text as represented in Constantinople in the eighth century was, in Heil's words: "un texte en désaccord avec les règles de la grammaire, plein de fautes d'orthographe." So, for example, ὑπερκόσμιος (transcendant) and the adverb ὑπερκοσμίως are rendered by *gerazard*, as if the stem κόσμος here meant "order" or "arrangement". For when κόσμος in the sense of "world" stands alone and not in compound form it is rendered by *ashkharh*.

The term *μυστικός* is important to Dionysius. It is rendered sometimes by *khorthrdakan*, the adjective from *khorthourd* which means *μυστήριον*. But sometimes *μυστικός* is rendered by *bch'olakan*, an adjective derived from the participle from the verbal stem *bch'em*, which is used of animals "roaring" or "bellowing". Now the adjective *μυκητικός* is used of beasts' voices by Dionysius in II 2 and there rendered by *bch'olakan*. Did Stephen of Siunik' think that *μυστικός* was related to *μυκητικός*, or was his Greek text defective? This curious term *bch'olakan* is also attested in two later Armenian writers in the sense of "mystical", no doubt due to the influence of the Armenian translation of the Dionysian corpus.¹⁹ Finally, one funny mistake in an otherwise rather humourless text is worth noting. The word *διασώρης*, "follower, member of a group", is used often by Dionysius. In the accusative plural it becomes *διασώτας*; but that was read as if it were *θείας ώτας* (sic) and always rendered in the Armenian as "divine ears" (*astuatsayin akanjs*)! It is perhaps not surprising that in the seventeenth century Stephen of Poland found the first translation of Dionysius "obscure".

We may now briefly note some passages in Armenian texts where the influence of Dionysius is most evident. Sometimes Dionysius is included in lists of theological authorities without much elaboration. Thus Sebeōs, writing in the late seventh century, includes Dionysius the Areopagite in Athens as an example of a bishop who received ordination from the apostles, just as did Clement in Rome, Timothy in Ephesus, or Simon in Jerusalem. This passage occurs in a response sent by the Catholicos Nerses III (642-662) and the Armenian bishops to the emperor Constans II (642-668), rejecting the Greek Chalcedonian position.²⁰ In a letter by Stephen of Siunik' himself to the patriarch of Constantinople Germanos (715-730), Dionysius of Athens is credited with having seen a vision of the Saviour, as "the history relates".²¹ This is a reference to the so-called *Autobiography* of Dionysius, which was not translated into Armenian until the ninth century but which would have been known to Stephen

in Greek.²² Here it is worth noting that another text attributed to "Stephen the Philosopher" quotes Dionysius directly. The work is a theological treatise of Julianist tendency *On the Incorruptible Flesh of Christ*. It is in large part of florilegium where numerous authorities are cited; the quotation from Dionysius is in fact borrowed from the *Seal of Faith*. So whether or not Stephen of Siunik' is the author, as the editor of the text Tēr Mkrtch'ean thought, it is no evidence for the Armenian translation of Dionysius.²³

The Catholicos Khach'ik I (973-992) in a letter to the Metropolitan of Melitene mentions Dionysius as one of the theological authorities respected by Armenians.²⁴ And in a letter to the Metropolitan of Sebaste, quoted in Stephen of Tarōn (Asolik), ch. 21, the same Khach'ik quotes Dionysius and also refers to his vision of the Saviour. What is significant about the quotation in Asolik is that, although the passage is the same as that used in the *Seal of Faith*, the Armenian text is not that of the florilegium but has been taken from Stephen of Siunik's translation.

As an authority for the nine orders of angels Dionysius is explicitly quoted in some detail by Nersēs Shnorhali in the twelfth century.²⁵ Equally often Nersēs makes reference to these celestial hierarchies without mentioning Dionysius by name.²⁶ The *Law-code* of Mkhitar Gosh, compiled later in the same century, expounds these matters in specific detail, quoting as source the writings of saint Dionysius the Areopagite – "the pride of Athens".²⁷ In the following century, Smbat in his *Law-code* takes up the tradition of the nine ranks of clergy within the church as being parallel to the nine ranks of angels. But he does not quote Dionysius explicitly. On the other hand, he expands this parallelism to the nine ranks of courtiers in the imperial palace of Constantinople. The ranks are: Silentarii; Vestitores, Candidati; Prosecutores; Excubitores; Stratores, Scholarii; Decani; Cursores.²⁸

But of all texts dating to this period it is the *Commentary on the Liturgy* by Nersēs of Lambron that quotes Dionysius as authority the most frequently. Dionysius teaches us that the church is the image (*patker*) of heaven, so the ranks within the church reflect the heavenly orders.²⁹ Nersēs goes on to claim that it was the blessed Dionysius who set the rules for basic rituals, from minor matters such as censuring to rules for the making of *myron* and questions of ordination, topics indeed discussed in the treatise on the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.

The thirteenth century historian Kirakos Gandzakets'i quotes Vankan Vardapet using Dionysius as an authority for the procession of the Holy Spirit.³⁰ And in the following century the influence of Dionysius is strongly attested in Gregory of Tat'ev, in whose massive *Book of Questions* a whole chapter is devoted to angelology. This has been reviewed fairly extensively by Dom Dedurand, who indicates that Gregory has introduced significant changes into the theology of Ps.-Dionysius.³¹

The most noteworthy claim for the authority of Dionysius is in an earlier document where he is cited in support of the doctrine of one nature in Christ. The document in question is an "Exposition, in accordance with apostolic tradition, of the true orthodox faith against the dyophysite Nestorians by Sahak the Armenian Catholicos and Great Translator." It runs to sixty-nine pages in the collection of letters and documents known as the *Book of Letters*.³² Although the title "translator" is designed to make one associate the treatise with Sahak I, colleague of Mashtots in the early fifth century, the contents of the document point to a later date since Pope Leo, Theodoret of Cyr and Cyril of Alexandria are quoted. Its Julianist tendencies have been noted by earlier scholars, and Tēr Minassiantz ascribed it to Sahak III (677-703).³³ But the text is probably later than that. For in discussing the earliest Armenian Christian traditions, the author quotes (without so acknowledging) from Moses Khorenats'i's version of the story of Abgar, not the version in Eusebius or Labubna.³⁴ And the role of Bartholomew as a missionary in Armenia is stressed, whereas that apostle's work in Armenia seems to be unknown before the eighth century, being first mentioned by Stephen of Siunik' himself.³⁵ Be that as it may, the important point is that Dionysius is associated with sources like the Apollinarian frauds attributed to Athanasius which stress the theme: "one nature of the Word incarnate".³⁶ Furthermore, states Sahak, Dionysius did not mingle water with the wine at mass. For had he done so, he would have indicated a dual nature. The uncorrupted wine (*anapakan*, which has Julianist overtones) indicates the single nature of Christ.³⁷ But Sahak's claim conflicts with the use of *ἡ τοῦ οἴνου κρᾶσις* in Dionysius, *Epistle IX 6* (*ginwoyn khairnumn* in the Armenian of Stephen of Siunik'). Here one is reminded of the famous refusal of the Catholicos Moses II (574-604): "I shall not cross the Azat; I shall not eat leavened bread; I shall not drink hot water," quoted in the *Narratio*.³⁸

However, it is not my intention here to raise questions of Christology or ritual. The importance of the text of the Dionysian corpus in Armenia is indicated not only by the large number of surviving manuscripts and by the allusions in Armenian writers to Dionysius. More important for the history of ideas are the commentaries written on that corpus in its Armenian version. The earliest seems to be that of Hamam in the tenth century.³⁹ More elaborate is that of David and Jacob of the thirteenth century. Isaías Nch'ets'i also is credited with a commentary on Dionysius. But the investigation of the commentaries and scholia will have to await the establishment of the Armenian text as rendered by Stephen of Siunik', to which edition I hope that these comments may be relevant.

Notes

1. According to S. S. Arevshatyan, "Davit' Anhalt'e ev hin Hayastani P'ilisop'ayan Mitk'e", *Patma-banasirakan Handes* 88 (1980, part 1), 21-39, the Ps.-Dionysian corpus was put together by a consortium of scholars that included the elusive "David the Invincible Philosopher" — *obscurum per obscurius!* Although it is tempting to think of this theory as but an Armenian riposte to the idea that Dionysius was Peter the Iberian, it does at least draw attention to Armenian interest in the philosophical schools of the Eastern Mediterranean in the fifth and sixth centuries.
2. In addition there are numerous manuscripts containing the Armenian version of the *Autobiography* of Dionysius the Areopagite. This has been published by N. Akinean in his *Niwt'er Hay Vkeyabanut'ean Usumnasirut'ean hamar*, Vienna 1914. It is noteworthy that the Armenian version, made in 880 in Jerusalem, was rendered via Georgian. On this, and on the question of the origin of the Georgian version itself, see P. Peeters, "La version ibéro-arménienne de l'autobiographie de Denys l'Aréopagite", *Analecta Bollandiana* 39 (1921), 277-313.
3. A brief account of Stephen of Poland's activity may be found in N. Polarean, *Hay Grolner*, Jerusalem 1971, 548-9. Numerous copies of colophons describing his translation of the Dionysian corpus will be found in the catalogues of the major collections of Armenian manuscripts (e.g., J. Dashian, *Catalog der armenischen Handschriften zu Wien*, Vienna 1891, no. 255).
4. *Knik' Hawatoy*, ed. K. Tēr-Mkrtch'ean, Ėjmiatsin 1914. Cf. J. Lebon, "Les citations patristiques grecques du Sceau de la foi", *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 25 (1929), 5-32.
5. Moses Daskhurants'i, *Patmut'iwn Ałuanits'*, III 17. For the date of this work see the Introduction to C. J. F. Dowsett, *The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranci*, London Oriental Series 8, London 1961.
6. Stephen Orbelean, *Patmut'iwn Tann Sisakan*, ch. 31.
7. For a full discussion of these accounts see S. Gero, *Byzantine Inconoclast during the Reign of Leo III*, CSCO Subsidia 41, Louvain 1973, Appendix C.
8. Moses Khorenats'i, *Patmut'iwn Hayots'*, III 61-62. Moses' sources for the description of his travels are elucidated in the commentary *ad loc.* in R. W. Thomson, *Moses Khorenats'i, History of the Armenians*, Cambridge, Mass. 1978.
9. G. Zarp'analean, *Matenadaran Haykakan T'argmanut'eants' Nakhneats'*, Venice 1889, 371.
10. Kirakos Gandzakets'i, *Patmut'iwn Hayots'*, ed. K. A. Melik-Ōhanjanyan, Erevan 1961, 72-74, 120.
11. Gregory of Narek, *Matenagrut'iwnk'*, Venice 1840.
12. See the description in the Catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts in the Matenadaran: Ō. Eganyan, A. Zeyt'unyan, P'. Ant'abyan, *Ts'uts'ak Dzeigrats' Mashtots'i Anvan Matenadarani*, vol I, Erevan 1965. I am grateful to the authorities of the Matenadaran for providing me with microfilms of these two manuscripts.
13. For example, in the *Celestial Hierarchy*, II 2, *συνθεσις* is rendered by *sharzhadrut'iwn* in Mat. 167 and by *sharagrut'iwn* in Mat. 49. Both are corruptions of **sharadrut'iwn*, which is an exact translation of *συν* (*shar*) and *θεσις* (*drut'iwn*).
14. For example, in the *Celestial Hierarchy*, I 3, *σχημα* is correctly rendered by *dzew* in Mat. 167, but corrupted to *dzer* in Mat. 49.
15. R. Roques, G. Heil, M. de Gandillac, *Denys l'Aréopagite, La Hiérarchie céleste*, Sources chrétiennes 58 bis, Paris 1970. This is a reprint of the 1958 edition with only a few additional notes.

16. For the Syriac version in Sinaiticus Syrus 52 of the seventh century see Heil (as note 15), 51-53. For other Syriac texts see J.-M. Hornus, "Le corpus dionysien en syriaque", *Parole de l'Orient*, 1 (1970), 69-93; and G. Wiessner, "Zur Handschriftenüberlieferung der syrischen Fassung des Corpus Dionysiacum", *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 1972, no. 3. A comparison of the Syriac texts provided by Hornus and Wiessner with the Armenian, and a collation of the readings given by Heil indicate very clearly that the Armenian does not follow the Syriac renderings.
17. See the Introduction by Heil (as note 15),
18. As, for example, with *οὐνθεοῖς*; see note 13 above. On the classification of Armenian texts in the "Hellenizing" style see H. Manandean, *Yunaban dprots'ew nra zargats' man shrjannere*, Vienna 1928.
19. See G. Awedik'ean, Kh. Siwrmelean, M. Awgorean, *Nor Bargirk' Haykazean Lezui*, Venice 1836, s.v.
20. Sebēos, *Patmut' iwn*, ed. G. V. Abgaryan, Erevan 1979, 154.
21. *Girk' T'lt'ots'*, Tiflis 1901, 380.
22. See above, note 2.
23. K. Tēr-Mkrtch'ean, "Vasn anapakanut'ean marmnoyn, Step'annosi Imastasiri asats' eal", *Ararat*, 35 (1902), 368-400.
24. *Girk' T'lt'ots'*, 306.
25. Nerses Šnorhali, *Opera*, trans. J. Cappelletti, Venice 1833, vol. II, 214, 276.
26. *Ibid.*, 219; *Yisus Ordi (Jésus, fils unique du Père)*, trans. I. Kéchichian, *Sources chrétiennes* 203, Paris 1973, stanzas 816, 880.
27. Mkhitar'ar Gosh, *Girk' Datastani*, ed. Kh. T'orosyan, Erevan 1975, 132, 139.
28. J. Karst, *Armenisches Rechtsbuch*, Strassburg 1905, § 60.
29. Nerses Lambronats'i, *Meknut' iwn Khorhrdots' Pataragin*, Venice 1847, 33.
30. Kirakos (as note 10), 344.
31. M. Dedurand, "Une somme arménienne au XIV^e siècle", *Etudes d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale, Quatrième série*, Université de Montréal, Publications de l'institut d'études médiévales XIX, 1968, 217-277.
32. *Girk' T'lt'ots'*, 413-482.
33. See G. Garitte, *La Narratio de Rebus Armeniae*, CSCO Subsidia 4, Louvain 1952, 354.
34. *Girk' T'lt'ots'*, 414; cf. Moses Khorenats'i, II 26.
35. *Girk' T'lt'ots'*, 323.
36. *Ibid.*, 442.
37. *Ibid.*, 479.
38. Garitte, *Narratio*, 242-4.
39. E.g., Matenadaran 6362, dated to A.D. 1181.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Page 123, note 28: The extensive discussion of the nine ranks found in Smbat is already in Mxit'ar's *Lawcode*. See also R.M. Bartikjan, 'O vizantijskom Klitorologii v Sydebnike Mxitara Gosha i ego armjanskom perebodchike', *Patmabanasirakan Handes* 126 [1989, pt. 3], 197-204.

The Armenian text of the Dionysian corpus has now been published: R.W. Thomson, *The Armenian Version of the Works Attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite*, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 488 [text] and 489 [translation] [Scriptores Armeniaci 17 and 18], Louvain 1987.

XVII

SOME PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS IN THE *TEACHING OF GREGORY*

Extensive theological treatises by early Armenian writers are few in number, so it is unfortunate that one of the most elaborate should be almost completely unknown to Western scholars. This is the *Teaching* of Gregory, the longest of the various documents included in the history attributed to Agathangelus. It is inserted into a sermon supposedly preached by Gregory to the court of Tiridates, but is marked as a separate section in the manuscripts and is only found in the Armenian text of the history (of the various versions only the Arabic shows any knowledge of the *Teaching* ¹). Despite its length, most scholars have passed over it with a mere mention, or at best the remark that its Christology dates from the period before the council of Ephesus, and the fullest account of this work is primarily designed to defend the author from charges of docetism ². Its content and vocabulary are of great interest for the history of early Armenian theology, and it is with the latter that the following pages are concerned. In recent years two publications have drawn attention to the fluid state of correspondence between Greek and Armenian technical theological terms ³, so an examination of the terminology of the *Teaching* may provide a stepping-stone for further study of the development of Armenian theological vocabulary.

The author of the *Teaching* did not intend to give a complete exposition of the Christian faith; rather he took a few basic ideas and developed them in detail. His prime concern was to show the continuity

¹ For the various recensions and versions of the history, cf. G. Garitte, *Documents pour l'Étude du Livre d'Agathange*, Studi e Testi 127, Vatican 1946.

² S. Weber, *Die katholische Kirche in Armenien*, Freiburg 1903. Cf. also, V. Inglisian, *Chalkedon und die armenische Kirche*, in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, ed. A. Grillmeier und H. Bacht, vol. II, Würzburg 1953. The present writer could not obtain the two following works: G. Toumayan, *Agathangelos et la Doctrine de l'Église arménienne au Vème siècle*, Lausanne 1879; J. M. Schmid, *Reden und Lehren des heiligen Grigorijs des Erleuchteten*, Regensburg 1872.

³ P. Tekeyan, *Controverses Christologiques en Arméno-Cilicie*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 124, Rome 1939; M. Tallon, *Livre des Lettres*, Mélanges de l'Université S. Joseph, XXXII, Fasc. I, Beyrouth, 1955.

of the Old and New Testaments, to present the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the eternal will of God which was revealed by the prophets. Hence his arguments centre in the proper interpretation of the Scriptures and his exegesis is amply supported by extensive quotations from the Bible. The doctrine of the Trinity is expounded at various points in the treatise, but there is no attempt to develop a theory of the union in Christ of God and man. The author was unaware of the Christological debates of the mid-fifth century and consequently his philosophical vocabulary is neither extensive nor subtle. But in the main his terms are employed in a consistent manner, and by a consideration of the various passages in which they occur, a basis for comparison with other works can be laid. All Christian philosophical thought starts from concepts originally expressed in Greek, so the four terms *οὐσία*, *ὑπόστασις*, *φύσις* and *πρόσωπον*, have been chosen as being the most essential for which the Armenian language had to find suitable equivalents.

The *Teaching* was composed before theological debate had crystallised philosophical terminology in Armenian, but its author was acquainted with several terms not found in the Bible which formed the frame for his exposition. It may, therefore, be interesting briefly to consider the renderings in the New Testament of these four terms, before examining their equivalents in the *Teaching*.

The first, *οὐσία*, does not occur (except in Luke 15. 12, meaning « property, possessions ») in the New Testament, nor do the Armenian equivalents *դոյութիւն*, *խլութիւն*. The term *էութիւն* which is the usual translation of *οὐσία*, and an exact parallel to the Syriac rendering ܐܘܬܐܪܬ⁴, occurs only once (Hebrews 1, 3), and there for *ὑπόστασις*. *ὑπόστασις* was sometimes expressed in Armenian by *Հաստատութիւն*, which in the New Testament usually retains its basic meaning of « making firm ». This term also seems modelled on the Syriac rendering, where only the second part of the Greek compound is expressed. As an equivalent for *ὑπόστασις* it occurs twice (Hebrews 3, 14; 11, 1), but frequently elsewhere to render : *πληροφορία*, *βεβαίωσις*, *τοῖς ἀμετάθετον*, *καταρτισμός*, *κατάρτισις*, *εἰλικρινεία*, *ἀδρότης*, *στερέωμα*, *ἐδραΐωμα*, where the Syriac has a similarly wide range of words. The narrower philosophical sense of *ὑπόστασις*

⁴ The formation of *էութիւն* (an abstract noun based on the 3rd. person sing. of a verb) is a rare one in Armenian and may be a calque on ܐܘܬܐܪܬ, itself so formed.

was later rendered in Armenian by *զօրութիւն*, not an unequivocal term itself, meaning «power» and closer to the Greek *ἐνεργεία*. *Φύσις* in the New Testament is always translated by *բնութիւն* or its cognates (with a sole exception in Ephesians 2, 3)⁵. *Πρόσωπον*, in cases where the meaning «person» is intended, has no regular equivalent, either *երեսք* or *դէմ* being used.

There is no consistent employment of philosophical terms in the Greek New Testament nor, consequently, in the Armenian version. But Armenian writers developed their own usage and in the *Teaching* a few of the above mentioned words are not used at all, while others are given a more precise definition.

In the *Teaching*, *էութիւն* is the term applied to the existence of the Deity, never to any lesser creature. It refers to the only eternally existent Being; only the Son and the Holy Ghost share the *էութիւն* of the Father (259)⁶. In § 362 this expression is coupled with *Աստուծութիւն* and *խկութիւն*: the three Persons of the Trinity are equal in these respects. The unity of the Trinity is frequently described as *էական* and in § 458 the word *էականութիւն* is coined.

The term *խկութիւն* (essence) is found in conjunction with *էութիւն* and the adjective *խկական* is frequently applied to the Deity. The Trinity is defined as: «One Lord, three Persons, one hypostasis ... one in consubstantial glory ... one only in essence» (383) or «three perfect Persons, one perfect will ... one essence, one existence, one Deity» (382). But the author of the *Teaching* does not elaborate the difference between «essence» and «existence» or explain how he understood the exact connotation of these two terms.

The basic difference between the eternal existence of God and the transitory life of man is reflected in the antithesis between *էութիւն* and *լինելութիւն*. The latter word refers to created beings (262). This contrast between the two planes of existence is stressed by the author of the *Teaching* who changes a quotation from Philippians 2, 6 (*οὐχ ἄρπαγὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ*), where the Armenian New Testament has *լինել* for *εἶναι*, into *էանալ* (711). Here the emphasis is on being like God, so the appropriate verb to describe this truer existence is substituted.

⁵ *ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὁργῆς* : *էաք արդարեւ որդիք բարկութեան*.

⁶ The numbers refer to the chapters of the critical edition by Ter-Mkrtyčean and Kanayanç, Tiflis 1909.

The verb *գոյ* is also used of the existence of God. The Word is described as having a *գոյացութիւն* without any beginning (391) and the Trinity has a common *գոյութիւն* for the three Persons (705). The equation of *գոյութիւն* with *οὐσία* and *էութիւն* with *ὑπόστασις* is found in the Armenian version of the anathemas⁷ added to the Nicene creed, where the Syriac has ܐܬܗܘܐ and ܠܗܘܐ respectively. In the *Teaching* God's nature is referred to indifferently as *էական* or *գոյական* and God is described as never having been seen by anyone *գոյիւ* (382). Creation was made from what did not exist before; Adam was made and given life from the « non-existent » *չգոյէն* (275), more usually *յոչընչէ* (439, 620 etc.).

So what does not partake of the *էութիւն* of God was created from nothing and exists (*լինել*) on a lower plane. There is, however, some uncertainty in § 272 whether created beings are made from absolute non-existence or from some undifferentiated substance, like Anaximander's *ἄπειρον*. The Armenian reads: *ամենայն արարածոց առեալ հրաման լինել յաննիւթոյ, ի չբաւոր յանկերպարան նիւթոյ*, where the exact connotation of *նիւթ* is confused. Elsewhere in the *Teaching* *նիւթ* is defined as *տարրական* « material », but this is not very helpful as *տարրական* is only used in contrast to the « immaterial » Godhead or the souls of the angels. But since the writer refers frequently to the biblical doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, it is unlikely that the one phrase « from formless matter » (*յանկերպարան նիւթոյ*) should be pressed in a Platonic sense; the author's habit of placing synonyms in juxtaposition to emphasise a point (a common feature of Armenian style) frequently leads to obscurities and inconsistencies.

⁷ A similar phrase occurs in the anathemas of Abd-Isho (Book of Letters, p. 68). In the *Teaching* there is no clear distinction between *οὐσία* and *φύσις* nor between *φύσις* and *ὑπόστασις*. Although their Armenian equivalents may be used consistently on the surface, further inquiry into their precise connotation reveals an inadequate grasp of Greek philosophical ideas. Christ took a human nature, yet his own nature is unchanging (588). Here « nature » is the same as « hypostasis ». Such ideas are in accord with Cyril's *μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη*. But the Armenians claimed to base their faith on Nicea, interpreted anachronistically by John Mandakuni who could write: « the Fathers at Nicea did not distinguish two or several natures... but they said one nature (*ἁνιւթիւն*, whereas the Nicene creed has *էութիւն*) ... the nature of the Word is the same as that of the Father... the nature of the Word is the divinity (Book of Letters, p. 33) ».

The equivalent of *ὑπόστασις* in the *Teaching* is not *Հաստատութիւն* (which here retains its basic meaning of «firmament» or «confirmation»), but *գորութիւն* which sometimes keeps the meaning of «power», especially in compounds. The phrases «consubstantial hypostasis of the Trinity», «one hypostasis, three Persons» occur frequently, and in § 493 it is stated that the hypostasis of Christ was the same before, during and after the passion and resurrection. The «essential hypostasis» (*ինքնաբուն գորութիւն*) of God is opposed to the material created nature of man (263), whose creation in God's image is described in respect of rationality, not in respect of the *աստուածաբուն գորութիւն*.

«Nature» (*բնութիւն*) is a term of wider application than those so far discussed, in that all beings, created or eternal, have their own individual nature which has to be further defined before the differences between objects are apparent. The «nature» of God is described as *էական*, *գոյական*, uncreated, invisible etc. In § 362 occurs the curious phrase *մի էութիւն բնութեան* which seems to be a forceful way of saying that the Deity can be defined as one existence. Christ humbled Himself, but «remained in his own nature» (378). He «put on human flesh and came down into our likeness, but remained in the glory of his Father's divine nature» (381). Those who were scandalised at his flesh, denied Christ's nature, for He was united to the flesh *բնութեամբ* (369).

Created substances have each their own nature. Water was made «from nothing into the nature of water» (453) and was turned into the «nature of fire» in the times of the sacrifices (544). Varieties of fruit have the same nature, while being different colours (i.e. genus and species, 643), whereas all plants are fixed in their own nature and cannot change (646). Among the material creatures, man has his own nature which Christ took upon Himself, thus becoming a complete man; whereas He Himself is by nature the only-begotten Son (588). But the mode of union of the two natures is not discussed. The Trinity is one consubstantial nature of three perfect Persons (703). Thus «nature» is a term of differing meaning to the context; its definition is not elaborated, nor is it clear what essential characteristics are necessary for an object to be «of the nature» of any given genus.

The expression used in the *Teaching* for «Person» is always *անձն*, with the sole exception of § 623 where the number of the Persons

(*Էրեսայ*) in the Trinity is mentioned. *Անձն* means « self » or « soul », in which latter sense it is employed both of the angels (who have immaterial souls 324) and of men (576, in the Christian sense of « soul »). But generally this term is reserved for each of the three Persons of the Trinity, distinct as Persons, yet who are one hypostasis, one will and of consubstantial nature.

The author of the *Teaching* was thus not unaware of the niceties of philosophical terminology in theological argument. He never defines his terms, but does avoid ambiguities which were to cause such confusion later. Tekeyan has shown how *գորութիւն*, *բնութիւն*, *էութիւն* and *անձն* varied in exact significance and degrees of correspondence at different periods⁸. The *Teaching* already employs these terms, which were to remain the key expressions of later Christological debate. Perhaps the simplicity of the author's thought prevented him from becoming immeshed in verbal obscurities, for whereas much of his exegesis of scriptural quotations is idiosyncratic in the extreme, yet the basis of his exposition is firmly rooted in the Bible.

An examination of the use of the above mentioned terms and their exact significance in each succeeding stage of theological thinking is the first step in any history of Armenian Christology. It is therefore of some interest to consider the connotation of these words in earlier treatises written before controversy became primarily concerned with Christology and the meaning of these terms underwent significant change and development.

Although the *Teaching* must antedate the sixth century when knowledge of the council of Chalcedon was brought to Armenia, yet the ideas implicit in this work are often in harmony with the subsequent dogmatic position of the Armenian church. There is scope for further research in the earliest expressions of Armenian Christian thought and the extent to which they moulded later ideas, for the Armenians remained firmly attached to traditional concepts and refused to accept the « innovations » of Chalcedon.

⁸ Op. cit. esp. pp. 75 ff.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

A full translation of the *Teaching* with Introduction and commentary has been published: R.W. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory: An Early Armenian Catechism*, Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 3, Cambridge, Mass., 1970. The full Armenian text of Agathangelos has been reprinted from the 1909 critical edition: Agathangelos, *Pat'mowt'iwn Hayots'*, Delmar, New York, 1980, with Introduction and brief Bibliography by R.W. Thomson.

For recent studies of the *Teaching* see now M. van Esbroeck, 'Le "De Fide" géorgien attribué à Hippolyte et ses rapports avec la "Didascalie" de Grégoire l'Illuminateur dans l'Agathange (BHO 330)', *Analecta Bollandiana* 102 [1984], 321–328; and for parallels in Syriac L. Ter-Petrosyan, 'Grigor Lusavorč'i Vardapetut'yan Asorakan Albyurnerë', *Banber Matenadarani* 15 [1986], 95–109.